



Administering the Maryland Needs Assessment in Community Schools

Maryland State Department of Education

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Presentation Outline

Overview of Community Schools

About the Needs Assessment

Components of the Needs Assessment

- Asset mapping
- Partnership inventory
- Gathering and analyzing data
- Surveys
- Focus groups and interviews

Next steps



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2. About the Needs Assessment
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Overview of Community Schools

Community schools have been present in some Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in Maryland for more than 25 years, with demonstrated positive results related to attendance and other school success factors.

What is a Community School?

- A community school is a **whole school model** designed to promote positive, equitable outcomes by providing students, families, and communities with the **physical health, mental health, academic, and extracurricular supports needed to thrive**.
 - Community schools serve as **hubs that bring families, communities, and partners together** to remove barriers to learning. Using an asset-based approach, community schools strive to strengthen connections between home, school, and communities to generate improved student outcomes.
- Community schools work in **collaboration with community partners**, local governments, and other stakeholders to **identify and address structural and institutional barriers** to achievement.
 - **Leveraging the power of the collective** allows community schools to provide resources to students and families where they need it the most—neighborhoods that have **been historically underfunded and underserved**.
- Community schools provide a wide array of **wraparound services that enhance student’s ability to be successful**.
 - These wraparound services include **safe transportation to and from school, vision and dental services, social workers and mental health counselors, extended learning time, and health and wellness services**.

Source: The Partnership for the Future of Learning. Community Schools Playbook.

Community Schools Coordinator (CSC)

Roles and Responsibilities of the CSC

- Determined by the LEA , and principal
- Develop, coordinate, manage partnerships
- Provide wraparound services
- Lead steering committee, participate in other school wide committees
- Connect students and families to resources
- Conduct the Needs Assessment
- Execute implementation plan



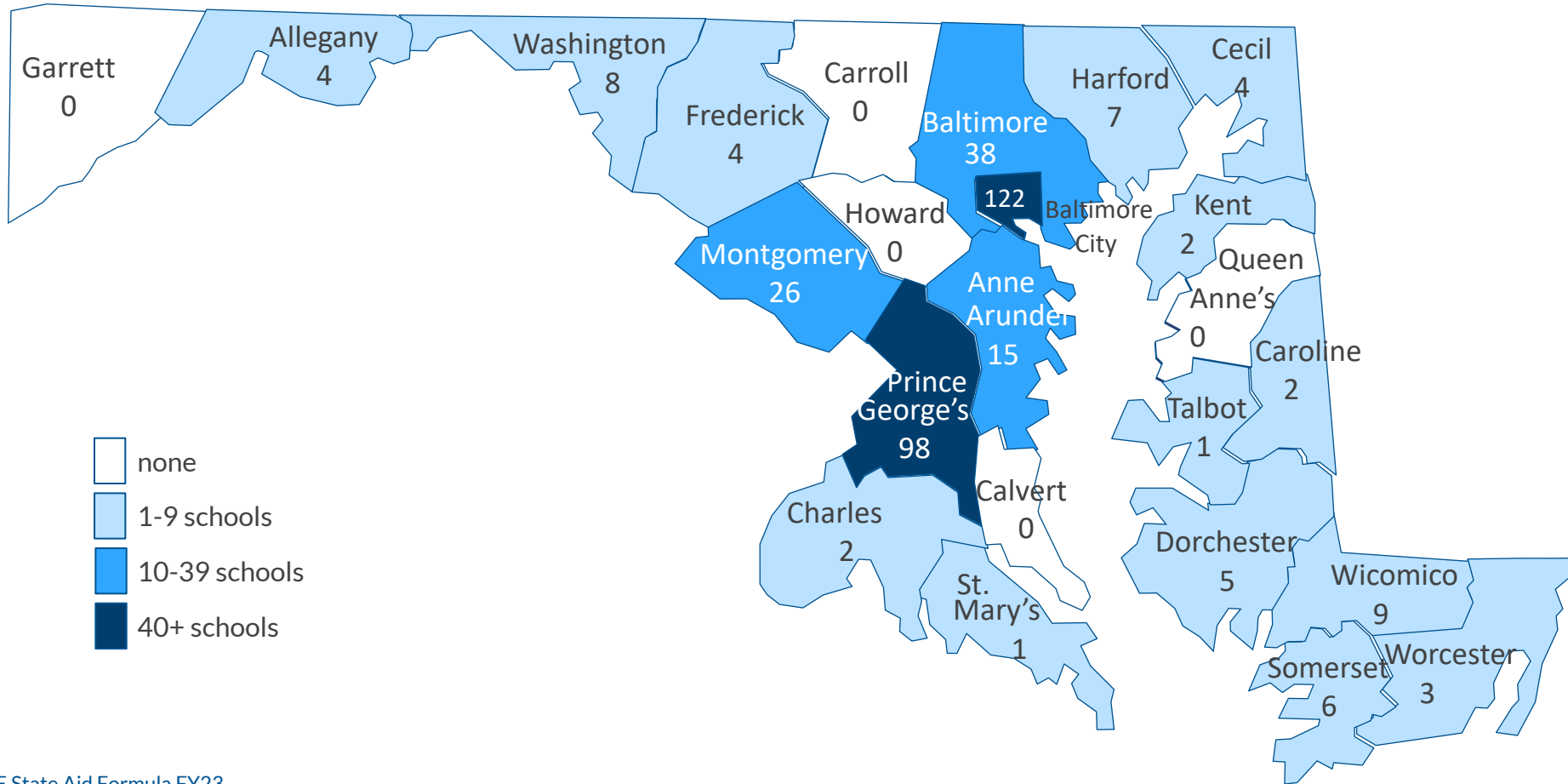
Check In

Select the responses that best match your school's resources and enter them in the chat room

- A. We have integrated student supports.
- B. We have expanded learning times and opportunities.
- C. We have active family and community engagement.
- D. We have collaborative leadership.
- E. I am not sure yet...

Distribution of Community Schools

Currently in FY 2023, there are 358 community schools in 19 LEAs receiving Concentration of Poverty Grants.



Source: MSDE State Aid Formula FY23

Maryland Concentration of Poverty Grant Funding

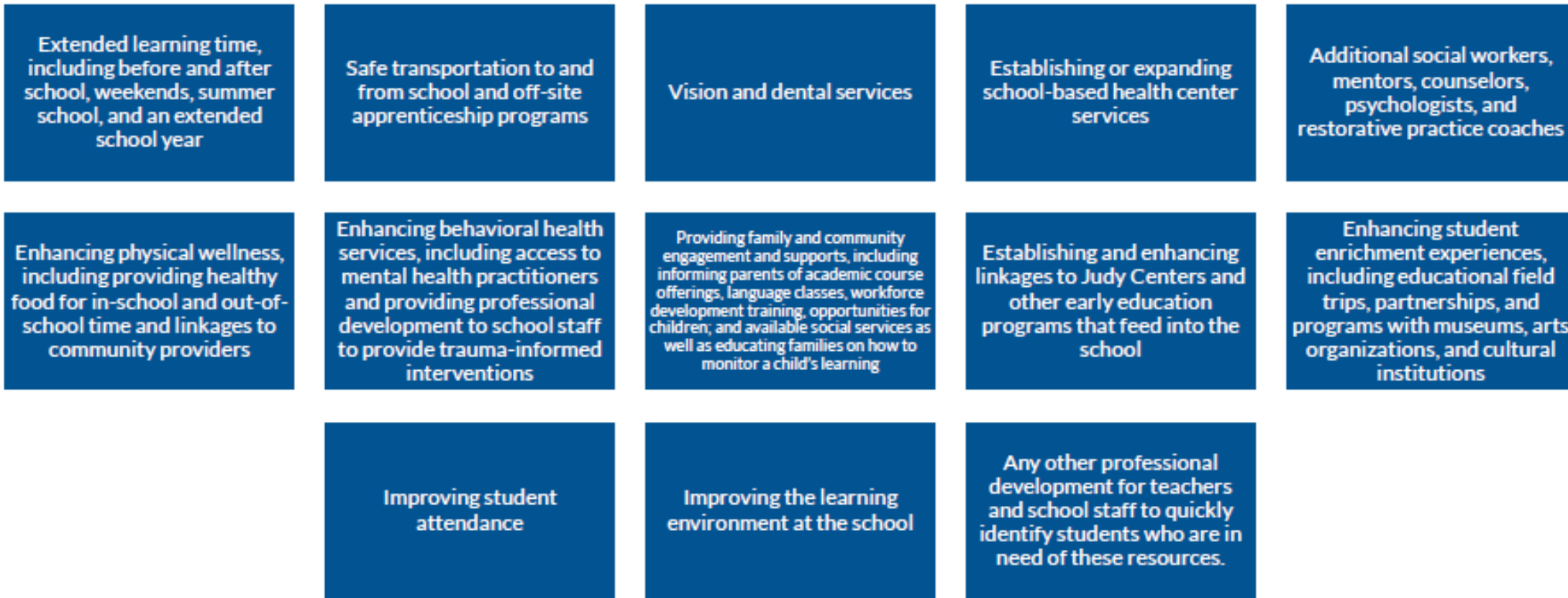
Personnel Grants

- Community Schools Coordinator
- Professional Healthcare Provider (licensed physician, licensed physician's assistant, or licensed registered nurse, practicing within the scope of their license)

Per Pupil Grants

- Calculation based on the number of students living in poverty in the school
- Funds used to provide wraparound services

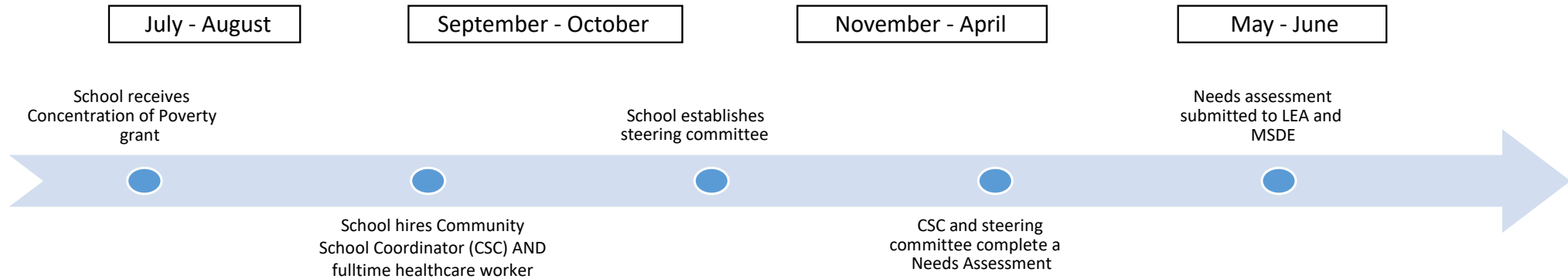
Wraparound Services Identified by the Blueprint



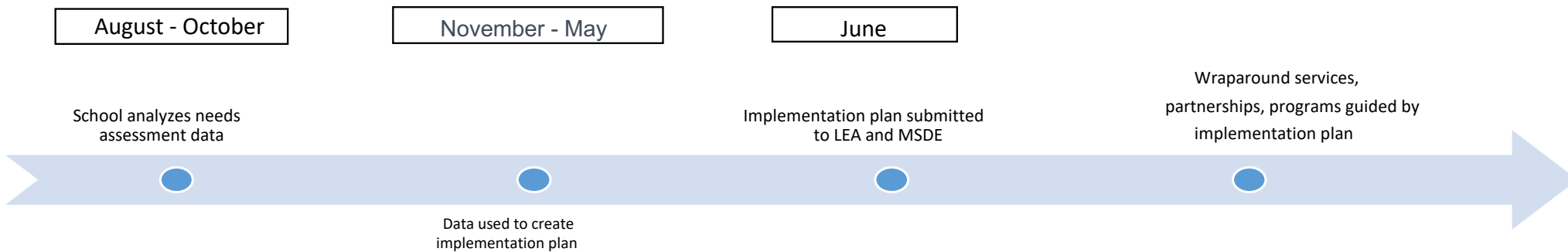
Source: MD Code, Education §9.9-101.

Community Schools Established Through Concentration of Poverty grants- Timeline

Year 1



Year 2



Before the Needs Assessment

1. Reach out to community partners and organizations to establish relationships, introduce and educate about community schools, and learn about programs/services

Listen to ideas about the design and launch of the community school

2. Determine managing entity
3. Ensure that the community school has committed leaders
4. Hire the Community School Coordinator
5. Ensure access to school health offerings (full-time professional healthcare provider)
6. Establish a Community School Steering Committee
7. Plan for professional learning and support

Committed Leaders

- Embrace the community school model
- Understand the significance of equity and culture responsiveness
- Establish a community of care and support for students
- Engage meaningfully with families and community





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About the Needs Assessment

Required of all concentration of poverty community schools, this collaborative process for gathering information on the needs of the school helps determine what assets the school can access, what needs exist, and what is needed to fill the gap between needs and assets.

What is a Community School Needs Assessment?



- A collaborative process for gathering information on the needs of a school
- Designed to determine what assets exist, what needs exist, and what stakeholders want from a community school
- Critical step in developing programming in a community school
- Without data and input from stakeholders, programs, and partnerships might not have the desired impact

What is a Community School Needs Assessment?

What does the legislation say?

HB 1300 (2021), Annotated Code of Maryland. §9.9-104, states that community schools must administer a Needs Assessment within one year of becoming a community school receiving the Concentration of Poverty grant

- Submitted to LEA and MSDE

The Needs Assessment should:

- Be completed in collaboration with:
 - the school principal
 - professional healthcare practitioner,
 - parent teacher organization/ school family council, and
 - others
- Include an assessment of the physical, behavioral, and emotional health needs of the students, their families, and their communities

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Administration of the Needs Assessment



- The MSDE recommends that the Needs Assessment be administered once every three years.
 - Some parts might be updated annually.
- Utilize a collaborative team to plan and execute administration of the Needs Assessment. The Community school steering committee might accomplish this.
- Collaboration is key!
- Share data, previous needs assessment results, and community agency data.

Use a Team!

Existing Community School Steering Committee

If no team exists, a team might include:

- CSC
- Principal
- School health worker
- Reps. from parent leadership organizations
- School counselor
- Teacher
- Families
- Community partners
- Community representatives
- OST representatives
- Coaches
- School support staff
- Students
- Judy Center Coordinator
- Representatives from early childhood community



Let's Chat

What questions do you have so far?

Does your school have a community school steering committee that could take on this work?

- If yes, who else might be included on the team?
- If not, how might you start this process? What support might you need?



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Components of the Needs Assessment

Assessing needs requires multiple methods of data collection. The main priority of the first year, the assessing of needs, directs the work and the success of the community school.

Five Components of the Needs Assessment

Asset mapping

Partnership inventory

Gathering and analyzing data

Surveys

Focus groups and interviews

Asset Mapping



Process for identifying and locating strengths and resources in a given community

Why asset mapping?

- Helps community schools develop an accurate picture of the full scope of the strengths, resources, and supports in a community
- May include looking at people, places, organizations, partnerships, etc.
- Represents potential partners and resources for the school, students, and families

Check In

Select the response that best describes your experience with asset mapping and enter it into the chat room.

- A. I am not really sure what this is.
- B. I have been involved in asset mapping but need more information.
- C. I have a good understanding of asset mapping.
- D. I am confident that I can manage a group to complete asset mapping.

What information is included in Asset mapping?

Might include community resources such as:

- Health partners
- Mental health providers
- Colleges or universities
- Non-profit organizations
- Businesses, faith-based institutions
- Recreation centers
- Childcare providers, before and after school providers
- Local management boards

And anyone else who may be able to support the services needed by families and students.

Process for Asset Mapping

- Form a team- may be the steering committee. Involve students, families, and the community.
- Select a process or protocol to follow.
- Map your assets.
- Share your results with the steering committee and other stakeholders, as needed.
- Consider which assets the school is currently utilizing and in what capacity, as well as which assets are being underutilized or not utilized at all.
- Identify needed assets and see if they exist.



Structure Asset Mapping Protocols

There are many structured asset mapping protocols available to community schools.

Resources include:

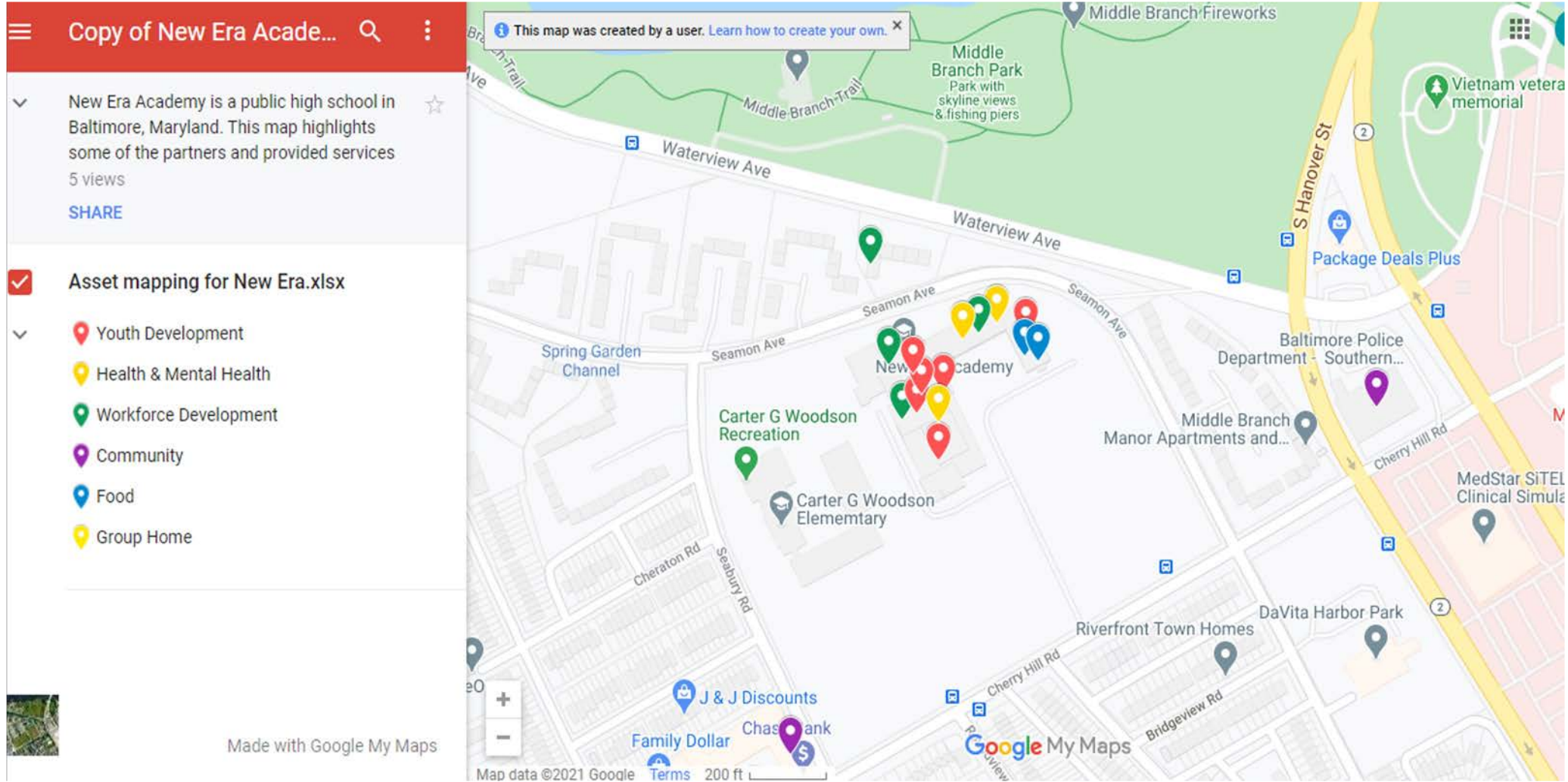
[Advancement Project: Participatory Asset Mapping Toolkit](#)

[UCLA Center for Health Policy Research: Asset Mapping](#)

[LISC: Asset Mapping](#)

[Southern Poverty Law Center: Community Asset Mapping](#)

Asset Map Example









Copy of New Era Acade... 🔍 ⋮

▼ New Era Academy is a public high school in Baltimore, Maryland. This map highlights some of the partners and provided services
5 views
[SHARE](#)

Asset mapping for New Era.xlsx

▼

-  Youth Development
-  Health & Mental Health
-  Workforce Development
-  Community
-  Food
-  Group Home

Made with Google My Maps

Map data ©2021 Google Terms 200 ft

Partnership Inventory

Identification of current partners and programs. Both internal and external.

Have the team make a list of current partnerships in the community and in the school.

Include information such as:

- Name of partner
- Points of contact information
- Address or contact information
- Date(s) of contact
- Type of partnership currently providing services to the school
- Population served
 - Where and when are they served?
 - Potential services
- Other

Partnerships



Consider:

How many partners does the school have?

What sectors do the partners represent?

Who is being served by these partners?

What gaps in service exist?

Sample Partnership Inventory

Name of Partner	Address	Contact Information	Sector	Purpose of Partnership	Population Served	Length of Partnership	Date(s) of Contact

Data Analysis



Needs assessment consists of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Data analysis is the quantitative analysis.

Why data analysis?

- Education, health, community metrics that provide more information about students, families, and the surrounding community
- Community health and social services data can be obtained using the [State of Maryland Open Data Portal](#).
- Educational data can be found in the [Maryland School Report Card](#)

Data Analysis- Before You Begin

Component Data is always plentiful (and can be overwhelming). Narrow your scope!

- What information can this data give me?
- How does it help me understand the needs of my students, families, or the community?

Collaborate with school leadership, other teams, internal/ external partners to gather data

- Needs assessments for federal programs (Title I, Title III, etc.)
- Judy Centers/Early Childhood Advisory Councils
- School Improvement Team/Academic Leadership Team
- Student support
- Local governments (health department, etc.)
- Hospitals

Data Analysis- Protocols

- Select a protocol to use to analyze the data
- Assists committees in examining data through multiple lenses
- Allows for examination of data in an organized, thoughtful way
- Facilitates productive conversations about data

[Harvard University- The Data Wise Improvement Process](#)

[Oakland Unified School District- Data Protocols](#)

Data Telling a Story

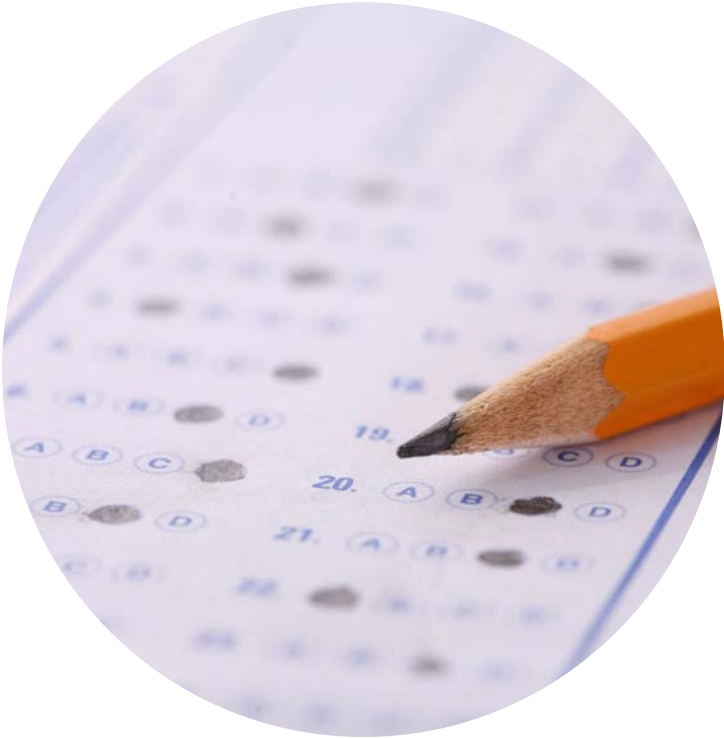
What does this data tell us about:

- the strengths of our school, students, families, and/or community?
- the needs of our school, students, families, and/or community?

What gaps exist in this data? Where might we get additional information?



Surveys



Surveys are tools that assist in gathering information about the wants and needs of various stakeholders.

The Maryland Community Schools Needs Assessment includes surveys for students, families, staff, and partners.

Why administer surveys? Surveys assist in gathering feedback from a wide range of people and the results can be used to gather information on what students, families, and communities want and need. They are generally easily administered.

Survey Forms

Can be distributed on paper, electronically, or both

Administer to grades 4+

Develop a plan to reach all stakeholders

- Communication

- Reminders

- Incentives

- Share results

Should be distributed and results analyzed before conducting focus groups

MSDE Staff and Partner Survey:

<https://forms.gle/sU33sS8weJ39CRUH8>

MSDE Student Survey:

<https://forms.gle/GRg6LxEkQfbrpUHu6>

MSDE Family Survey:

<https://forms.gle/ZLUd7AAVMQXNDTCG9>

Survey Forms- Analysis

Check In

- Review the “Family Survey” form.
- What kind of data might this survey provide about the needs of your community school?
- What modifications might need to be made so that it reflects the needs of your families?
- How might your school distribute the survey so that all families can participate?

Focus Groups and Interviews

- Longer interviews with small groups of participants designed to collect additional information
- Why hold focus groups?
 - Allows for gathering more in-depth information about a topic
 - Can help the community school gain a better understanding of a problem or need that emerges in the surveys or data analysis
- Note- while the other three components can be completed fluidly, the focus groups must be held after administering the surveys so that the results can be used to form questions and guide conversation.



Components of a Focus Group



- 5-10 participants
- Last 30-60 minutes
- Interviewer asks questions with a designated recorder taking notes
- Guided by questions based on findings in the data analysis and/or surveys
 - Questions may be developed and approved by the steering committee
 - Consistent across focus groups

Considerations for Holding a Focus Group



Plan, plan, plan

- Prepare questions ahead of time
- If possible, practice facilitation
 - Conversation will probably get derailed- how will you get it back on track?
- Establish ground rules and norms with the group
- Emphasize the importance of confidentiality
- Take notes
- Closing is important- thank participants for their time and ideas, discuss how the information will be used

Interviews

Identify individuals for interviews-usually key personnel

- School health practitioner
- Mental health providers
- Before and after school providers
- Key community partners
- Parent liaison and leaders
- Student leaders





Let's Chat

We have discussed the five components of the Maryland Community Schools Needs Assessment.

What feels manageable? Where might you need more support?

- a) Asset mapping
- b) Partnership inventory
- c) Gathering and analyzing data
- d) Surveys
- e) Focus groups and interviews



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Next steps

Needs assessments yield a lot of data. The Community Schools Advisory Council works to summarize the data to determine the significant needs of the students in the school and begin to develop an implementation plan to meet the identified needs.

Next Steps

With steering committee, consolidate all data to preform an analysis

Submit the results from all components of the Needs Assessment to the LEA and the MSDE in June 2023

Share the results with your stakeholders

Begin to create the implementation plan

Use the information to begin developing partnerships, programs, and services that benefit your students, families, and communities





Questions?

Other resources

[The MOST Network \(Maryland Coalition for Community Schools\)](#)

[National Center for Community Schools](#)

[Coalition for Community Schools](#)

[Prince George's County Public Schools Community Schools Asset map](#)

[Institute for Educational leadership Resources for Community Schools](#)

[Learning Policy Institute](#)

[Center for Education Equity](#)

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