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Schools as Community Hubs Strategy

Schools as Community Hubs Strategy is one of the main strategies in the [Destination APS Strategic Plan](#). The Schools as Community Hubs Strategy was developed locally by bridging existing research, best practices and frameworks guiding family and community engagement, and harnessing the voice and expertise of the APS students, families, staff and community partners. The Hubs Strategy is





aligned with established frameworks for [Family-School-Community Partnerships](#), [CO-MTSS](#) and [Community Schools](#), emphasizing integrated support systems, powerful engagement, and collaborative leadership.

To develop the Hubs Strategy we also



engaged our stakeholders through interviews, focus groups and surveys, reaching 640 individuals, representing 43 different schools, 19 APS departments and community organizations. This engagement drove the development of the Hubs Framework with five essential core pillars demonstrated in the picture at right.

The five pillars that each school community will implement over the course of 2025-2030 are:

- **Comprehensive Support Services:**
Comprehensive Support Services are an integrated system of academic, social-emotional, physical, and mental health



supports, collaboratively provided by schools, district teams, and community partners. These services are designed to meet the holistic needs of students and families by leveraging their diverse strengths and cultural assets. They aim to connect families to essential resources and remove barriers, ensuring every student and family feels heard, valued, and connected within their responsive school community.

- **Strong Family Partnerships:** *Strong Family Partnerships are a collaborative and inclusive relationship between families, schools, and the APS community, built on mutual respect and trust, with the shared goal of supporting student learning, healthy student social emotional development, and overall student well-being. These partnerships are rooted in culturally*



sustaining practices to honor and leverage the diverse linguistic, cultural, and experiential assets that families bring to the school community.

- **Community voice and shared decision-making:** *Community voice and shared decision-making involves actively engaging diverse stakeholders, including families, students, educators, and community members, in meaningful and ongoing collaboration to shape educational policies, practices, and programs in culturally sustaining ways. This pillar emphasizes creating structures and processes that ensure transparent dialogue, value all voices and expertise, and empower community members to be full partners in decisions that affect children and families, cultivating shared power and responsibility.*



- **Expanded and Enriched Learning Opportunities:**
Expanded and Enriched Learning Opportunities refer to intentional, high-quality programs and experiences that go beyond the traditional classroom to support academic growth, social-emotional development, and student engagement. These opportunities may include afterschool programs, summer learning, tutoring, STEM/arts enrichment, field experiences, and partnerships with community organizations.
- **Inclusive practices for psychological safety:** *Teaching strategies and environmental setups ensuring all students, regardless of ability, background, or difference, feel welcome, valued, and have equal access to learn together in the general classroom, by adapting lessons, removing barriers, and*



celebrating individual strengths to foster belonging and success for everyone. It moves beyond just physical presence to actively supporting diverse needs and challenging traditional segregated models.

All of these pillars contribute to a **Culture of Belonging, Safety and Care:**



Culture of Belonging, Safety, and Care is a welcoming and safe environment where every individual—students, families/caregivers, and staff—feels physically and emotionally safe as well as seen, valued, heard, and celebrated. It's more than caring relationships; it's a foundation cultivated through transparent processes and practices that promote equity, shared ownership, and authentic engagement.

Each school community has the opportunity to guide the implementation of this strategy at their school site through the participation in Needs and Asset Assessments, where each school will conduct



focus groups with students, families, staff and community partners to receive continuous feedback and be able to adjust the course of the implementation to build upon the assets of each school community.

By 2030, this proposal envisions schools as vibrant community hubs, fostering student engagement, family partnership, and community collaboration. This future state will ensure:

- **Students** will experience increased engagement, sense of belonging, and academic success.
- **Families** will be active partners in their child's education, have strong relationships with staff, and engage in parent leadership opportunities.
- **Staff** will build strong relationships with students and families, know how to connect students to effective resources, and utilize

community
partnerships to bring
learning to life!

- **Partners** will enhance students' academic and enrichment opportunities and engage with APS through clear support systems.



Contact Us

Aurora Public Schools

📍 [15701 E. 1st Ave., Aurora, CO 80011](#)

Phone: [303-344-8060](#)

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@aurorak12



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