Community Schools Work at the American Institutes for Research
AIR supports the implementation, evaluation, and improvement of community school initiatives.

AIR Advancing Evidence. Improving Lives.

We understand the importance and promise of community schools.

Community schools are a strategy to support students, their families, and the broader school community through cross-sector partnerships with community agencies and providers that support whole-child development and positive student, family, and community outcomes.

Key to the success of community schools is the coordination and alignment of services, activities, and supports around a widely shared vision for how the school and its partners can support student development and family and community well-being. Community schools are where everyone's voice matters; typically, they have multiple structures and platforms in place for shared, authentic decision making on strategy implementation.

AIR is not only an external evaluator; we are creative, out-of-the-box thinkers who will work alongside you in partnership to enhance implementation of your community schools initiative.

1 **Collaboratively design processes** for needs assessment, service planning, and continuous improvement, as well as develop systems for data collection and performance management, to fit the context of each district.
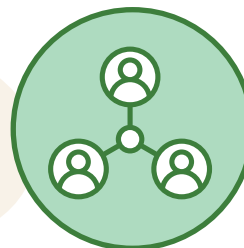
2 **Conduct rigorous multimethod evaluations** of both implementation and impact at the school, district, and state levels. AIR draws from both quantitative and qualitative data, using site visits, focus groups, interviews, administrative and program attendance data, and other survey data to create a more complete picture that informs shared decision making.

3 **Identify and implement critical organizational policies and processes** that drive effective community school implementation and ensure high-quality learning environments for students.

4 **Share the data story of initiatives** and develop innovative ways to reach broad audiences, including the growing field of educators working to implement this model in their communities.

We leverage extensive knowledge in three key areas to inform our work with community schools initiatives and drive technical assistance efforts:

- **Afterschool and summer learning:** AIR delivers professional development, consultation, training, coaching, and ongoing support through presentations, trainings, and technical assistance to help program leaders and staff create, improve, and maintain excellent programs.
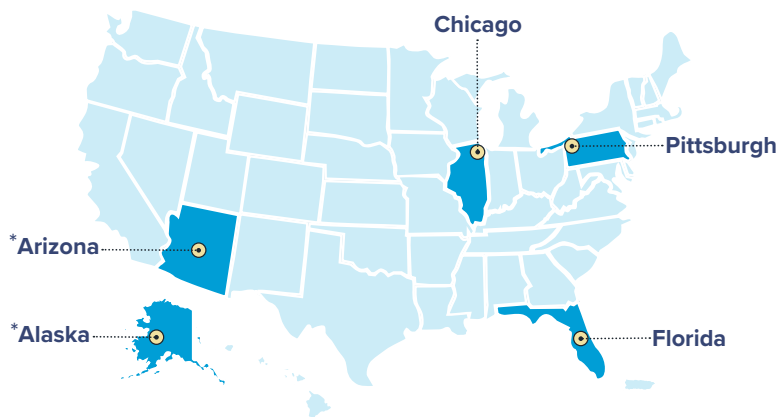
- **Parent and community engagement:** AIR develops the capacity of schools, districts, and state education agencies to implement, scale up, and sustain initiatives in family and community engagement that support student success.

- **Science of learning and development:** AIR helps schools and districts use the science that describes how young people learn and develop to transform education systems, provide opportunities to all students, and help every young person thrive.

AIR uses the strongest research evidence and deep technical assistance expertise to support community schools in achieving their goals.

See who we're working with:

Chicago

Pittsburgh

*Arizona

*Alaska

Florida

* New contracts in 2023.

Supported Pittsburgh Public Schools in its first year of implementation of its Community Schools Initiative: AIR worked with initiative leaders to assess how schools implemented community schools standards, document best practices for implementation, and understand the factors for the schools' sustainability and scale-up.

Established a long-term commitment to supporting Chicago Public School's Community Schools Initiative: Since 2003, AIR has worked with Chicago Public Schools to provide training and technical assistance for the design and delivery of high-quality, out-of-school programming, as well as conduct rigorous evaluations of both the implementation of the model and the effects on student outcomes. AIR is working with Chicago Public Schools to revise its process for conducting needs assessments, service planning, and monitoring implementation of the initiative.

Performed a statewide evaluation of Florida's Community Partnership Schools Initiative: AIR used a mixed-methods approach that included defining key performance metrics of effective community schools implementation, monitoring implementation of the Community Partnership Schools model, and examining the effect of the model on school outcomes. AIR then worked with the client to disseminate findings to key stakeholders and identify a path forward for additional evaluation and progress monitoring.

Contact us: To learn more about our work, please contact:

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