



Community School Assets and Needs Assessment Tool

A Template for Community School Leaders Conducting an
Assets and Needs Assessment

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Community School Assets and Needs Assessment

Under HB 1300 (2021) of the Annotated Code of Maryland (§9.9-104), all community schools must conduct an Assets and Needs Assessment within one year of receiving the Concentration of Poverty grant. This assessment must be submitted to both the Local Education Agency (LEA) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) by the end of the first year of operation as a community school.

Your school's completed Assets and Needs Assessment document must be submitted to the LEA and MSDE no later than **June 1, 2026**. This template is designed to guide you through the assessment process, offering reflective questions to help identify the root causes of the school's most significant needs. This information is crucial for developing the Implementation Plan in the second year of eligibility.

The template provides a comprehensive overview of your community school's current state, ensuring continuity and sustainability. New coordinators, principals, and other stakeholders must easily understand and build upon the existing efforts within the school and the broader community.

Local Education Agency: Caroline County Public Schools

Lead Agency (for some Baltimore City Schools): Maryland State Department of Education

Name of the School: North Caroline High School

Initial Year as a Community School: 2025-2026

Community School Coordinator Name: Denaja Wilson

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Phone: 410-479-2332

Date of Submission: Jun 1, 2026

Inventory of Assets

Asset mapping is a strategic procedure aimed at identifying and cataloging a community's various strengths and resources. It entails compiling detailed information on the individuals, institutions, and organizations contributing to the community's vitality. The recommended radius for conducting an asset and needs assessment within a community can range from two to five miles. This radius thoroughly examines the immediate environment, ensuring that local resources, services, and needs are accurately identified and addressed. However, the specific radius may vary and need to be expanded depending on the density and characteristics of the community. This information can be visually represented on a geographical map to facilitate easy access and understanding. [Google My Maps](#) is a commonly used application to develop an asset map, and you can view the tutorial on how to use the Google My Maps application [here](#).

Asset maps typically include, but are not limited to:

- Health providers
- Mental health providers
- Colleges or universities
- Nonprofit organizations
- Businesses
- Faith-based institutions
- Recreation centers
- Childcare providers
- Out-of-school time providers
- Government organizations
- Community leaders
- Community gathering places
- Green spaces

Insert a screenshot of the asset map on the following page or attach it to the document. If Google My Maps was used to create a link to an asset map, paste the hyperlink and ensure it is publicly accessible.

Asset Map

[NCHS Asset Map](#)

Partnership Inventory

Evaluate the existing partnerships within your school and the broader community. Partnerships encompass many stakeholders, including school-based staff, district-level personnel, libraries, parent-led organizations, local businesses, faith-based organizations, community centers, educational nonprofits, local health departments, and other entities that provide services or support.

Partnerships can be categorized based on their level of commitment and contributions:

- **Tier 1 Partnerships:** Less formal contributors may volunteer for specific events or provide occasional in-kind donations.
- **Tier 2 Partnerships:** These partnerships are often voluntary but involve an ongoing commitment to the school.
- **Tier 3 Partnerships:** These are formal partnerships with established contracts or memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

Identifying and categorizing these partnerships is essential for understanding the resources and support available to your school and developing strategies to strengthen and expand these relationships.

Name of Partner	Level of Partnership (Tier 1, 2, or 3)	Type of Service/Program	Population Served (Students, Staff, Families, All Community members)	On-Site or Off-Site Services	Length of Partnership	Frequency of Contact (Daily, Weekly, Monthly)
Choptank Community Health	Tier 3	Expanded Health Services	Students and staff	On-Site and Off-Site	10+ years	Daily
Next Generation Scholars	Tier 3	Student Enrichment Experiences	Students	On-Site and Off-Site	5 to 10 years	Daily
Trio	Tier 3	Student Enrichment Experiences	Students	On-Site and Off-Site	1 to 5 years	Weekly
Caroline County	Tier 3	Enhancing Behavioral Health Services	Students	On-Site	10+ years	Daily

Name of Partner	Level of Partnership (Tier 1, 2, or 3)	Type of Service/Program	Population Served (Students, Staff, Families, All Community members)	On-Site or Off-Site Services	Length of Partnership	Frequency of Contact (Daily, Weekly, Monthly)
Behavioral Health						
Mid-Shore Mediation	Tier 3	Improving the Learning Environment	Students, Families	On-Site and Off-Site	1 to 5 years	Weekly
Minary's Dream Alliance	Tier 2	Family and Community Engagement	Students and Families	On-Site and Off-Site	1 to 5 years	Monthly
Aarons Place	Tier 2	Family and Community Engagement	Students and Families	On-Site and Off-Site	1 to 5 years	Monthly
His Hope Ministries	Tier 2	Family and Community Engagement	All Community Members	Off-Site	5 to 10 years	Other
Caroline County Board of Elections	Tier 2	Other	All Community Members	On-Site and Off-Site	Less than 1 year	Annually
Girl Scouts of America	Tier 2	Expanded Health Services	Students	On-Site	1 to 5 years	Other
Pickering Creek Audubon Center	Tier 2	Student Enrichment Experiences	Students, Staff	On-Site and Off-Site	10+ years	Monthly
Caroline Helping Hands	Tier 3	Student Enrichment Experiences	Students	On-Site	5 to 10 years	Weekly
Caroline County	Tier 3	Enhancing Physical Wellness	Students and Community Members	Off Site	10 Plus Years	Monthly

Name of Partner	Level of Partnership (Tier 1, 2, or 3)	Type of Service/Program	Population Served (Students, Staff, Families, All Community members)	On-Site or Off-Site Services	Length of Partnership	Frequency of Contact (Daily, Weekly, Monthly)
Recreation and Parks						
YSU Bus	Tier 3	Expanded Health Services	Students	On-Site and Off-Site	1 to 5 years	Weekly
Toms Traveling coffee/ Kona Ice	Tier 3	Other	Students, community members, staff	On-Site and Off-Site	1 to 5 years	Monthly
Cook Center	Tier 2	Improving the Learning Environment	All Community Members	On-site and off Site	1 to 5 years	Weekly
Lion's Club	Tier 3	Improving the Learning Environment	Students	On-Site and Off-Site	10+ years	Weekly
Bullock's Deli	Tier 2	Improving the Learning Environment	Students, Staff, Families, All Community Member	Off-Site	10+ years	Other
Department of Social Services	Tier 2	Expanded Health Services	All Community Members	On-Site and Off-Site	10+ years	Monthly

Community School Steering Committee Membership

Forming a Community School Steering Committee is essential to the efficacy of the assets and needs assessment and the development of the implementation plan. This collaborative and representative body is integral to a community school's governance and strategic oversight. Comprising diverse stakeholders, each member is deeply committed to the success and

well-being of the students and the wider school community, ensuring a multifaceted approach to educational excellence and community engagement.

Steering Committee Members may include:

- Teachers
- School Administrators
- School Counselors
- Family Members
- Students
- Community Partners
- Community Leaders
- Extended Learning Program Staff
- Coaches
- Judy Center Coordinator
- Pupil Personnel Workers
- Other Support Staff

Name	Title/Role
Denaja Wilson	Community Schools Coordinator
RaeAsha Watkins	Community Schools Coordinator (Lockerman Middle School)
Chasity Wright	School Administrator
Matthew Spiker	School Principal
Kadeen Belle	Student voice
Lori Engle	Finance Secretary
Abigail Wittman	Community Partner/ Next Generation Scholars Representative
David Rosario Torres	Multilingual Learners Family Coordinator
Anthony Moore	Football Coach/ Community Partner

Name	Title/Role
Nicole Fisher	Supervisor, Community Schools and Equity
Melissa Prettyman	Pupil Personnel Worker
Tammy Lednum	Enrollment Secretary
Lauren Shilling	Teacher/ Parent representation
Terry Perkins Black	Trio Representative

Examine the asset map, partnership inventory, and steering committee members. Based on this information,

1. What partnerships does the school currently have with the surrounding community (mental health, physical health, out-of-school time, parent education, academic support, etc.)?

North Caroline High School has established a strong network of partnerships that support students, families, staff, and the broader community across several key areas. The school maintains a lot of Tier 3 partnerships that provide on-site and off-site physical, mental, and behavioral health services, including Choptank Community Health and Caroline County Behavioral Health. These partnerships ensure that students have consistent access to healthcare and behavioral health supports during the school day. Additionally, Mid-Shore Mediation supports students and families by improving the learning environment through conflict resolution and mediation services. We can use Mid-shore if a student is chronically absent to sit down with the family and North Caroline to resolve issues. Academic enrichment and postsecondary readiness are supported through partnerships with Next Generation Scholars and TRIO, which provide ongoing student enrichment, academic assistance, and college preparation opportunities. Family and community engagement is further strengthened through community events held at the school. Civic engagement and youth development opportunities are also provided through partnerships with the Caroline County Board of Elections and Girl Scouts of America. Our Career Coach has strong relationships with organizations like the MVA to offer permit testing here at North Caroline for students.

2. With which community asset(s) identified on the map does the school not have a relationship or partnership?

Despite the breadth of existing partnerships, several community assets identified on the asset map are not currently engaged in formal or informal partnerships with the school. These include local businesses and employers that could support workforce development, career exploration, and internship opportunities for students. Additional gaps exist in partnerships with higher education institutions beyond current enrichment programs, as well as with recreation centers, youth sports organizations, childcare providers, and food access organizations such as food pantries. The school also lacks partnerships with housing assistance agencies and broader social service organizations that could support family stability. Expanding partnerships with additional faith-based organizations may further enhance outreach and support for families.

Another area where community partnerships should be strengthened is the development of a stronger alumni network to support career exploration opportunities for students. Our career coaches would like to expand relationships with NC Alumni. Alumni can serve as valuable resources by sharing real-world career experiences, participating in mock interviews, offering job shadowing opportunities, and helping connect students with summer and part-time employment opportunities. Strengthening alumni engagement would provide students with increased exposure to a variety of career pathways while also building stronger connections between the school and the local community. Additionally, alumni involvement can help students develop professional skills, expand networking opportunities, and better understand workforce expectations after graduation.

3. What on-site partnership gaps need to be addressed?

While North Caroline High School provides several on-site services, there are important gaps that should be addressed to better support students and families. There is a need to expand academic tutoring and intervention services, particularly during extended learning times. Additionally, expanding access to college and career readiness programming such as FAFSA assistance, career counseling, and employer-led workshops would strengthen postsecondary planning and create more welcoming opportunities for family involvement.

There is also a need to enhance on-site family support services, including parent education workshops and DSS assistance with navigating available resources. Student mentoring programs, especially for those experiencing chronic absenteeism or academic difficulties, represent another key area for growth. Finally, expanding enrichment opportunities in STEM, the arts, and career exploration would further promote student engagement and overall success.

4. What off-site partnership gaps need to be addressed?

Several off-site partnership gaps limit students' and families' access to essential supports beyond the school building. These gaps include limited access to transportation-supported after-school and summer programming, which can create barriers for student participation. There is also a need for stronger partnerships with local businesses to provide employment, internship, and job-shadowing opportunities. Additional off-site partnerships with colleges, trade schools, and certification programs would strengthen postsecondary pathways for students. There is an opportunity for students to be exposed to postsecondary pathways in the 10th grade and students' responses from the assessments show a bigger need. Community-based recreation, wellness programs, and family stabilization supports such as housing assistance, food security, and financial literacy services, are also areas in which additional partnerships are needed.

5. What opportunities exist for leveraging current partners in different capacities?

Existing partnerships present significant opportunities to be leveraged in expanded or complementary ways. Choptank Community Health could support additional health education and preventative wellness workshops for students and families. Caroline County Behavioral Health may expand its role to include staff professional development, parent education, and preventative mental health programming. Next Generation Scholars and TRIO could collaborate on joint college readiness events, career fairs, and mentoring initiatives. Minary's Dream Alliance and Aaron's Place could co-facilitate family engagement events and assist with outreach to families who may be less connected to the school. Mid-Shore Mediation could support the implementation of restorative practices through training and coaching for staff and students.

6. Outline a plan for the school to reach out to partners with which it does not have a relationship.

To address identified gaps, North Caroline High School will implement a strategic approach to building new partnerships. This will include increasing visibility and engagement within the community by having the Community Schools Coordinator attend local outreach events to connect with potential partners and promote the school's role as a community school.

Additionally, the school will intentionally invite new partners to participate in larger community events such as Unity Day in the spring, Fall Fest in the fall, and Back-to-School Night, where additional community resources will be present. These events will serve as opportunities for partners to engage directly with students and families while learning more about the school's needs and mission. North Caroline High School will collaborate annually with the District to participate in partner/vendor events. The steering committee will also attend and host public events and talk about our community schools goals and how they can help us achieve our goals for our families.

Quantitative Data Analysis

To effectively measure the impact of the community school strategy, it is essential to establish a benchmark reflecting student performance over the previous two years before implementing the strategy. This benchmark can then be compared to student performance at the end of the three-year community school implementation plan, developed during the school's second year of eligibility. This comparison will provide valuable insights into the strategy's effectiveness and areas that may require further improvement.

Fill in the tables below using data available at <https://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov>. Additional data, such as school-level and district-level assessments, disciplinary referrals, school climate data, and local census data, can be analyzed and considered when responding to questions 4 through 7 following the data tables.

Examples of school-level or district-level data could include iReady, MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), Lexia, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), Exact Path, and DreamBox.

	School Year 2023 - 2024		School Year 2024 - 2025	
	All Students	Economically Disadvantaged/FARMs %	All Students	Economically Disadvantaged/FARMs %
Attendance Rate (Demographics)	90.3	88.5	90.4	88.7
Percent Chronically Absent (Demographics)	33.6	42	34.5	43.4
Percent Proficient in Mathematics (Report Card)	21.8	16.0	13.8	7.1
Growth Percentile in Mathematics (Report Card)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	School Year 2023 - 2024		School Year 2024 - 2025	
	All Students	Economically Disadvantaged/FARMs %	All Students	Economically Disadvantaged/FARMs %
Percent Proficient in English Language Arts (Report Card)	49	37.9	43.2	35.7
Growth Percentile in English Language Arts (Report Card)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percent Proficient in Science (MCAP)	35	24	49.4	38.4
Percent Making Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency (Report Card)	17	N/A	18.8	N/A
Four-year Graduation Rate (High School Only/Report Card)	84.3	85.7	86.4	82.4
Five-year Graduation Rate (High School Only/Report Card)	85.7	86.6	88.5	85.2

Attendance:

The chronic absenteeism data indicates that North Caroline High School continues to face attendance challenges, with 317 students identified as chronically absent, representing 27.1% of the student population. While this percentage remains high, it is important to recognize that North Caroline High School has one of the largest student populations in Caroline County Public Schools, which naturally impacts the total number of students identified within attendance issues. As a result, the school's overall numbers appear significantly larger when compared to smaller schools across the county.

The data reveals disproportionality among student populations. White students represent the largest number of chronically absent students at 154 students, followed by Hispanic students at 90 students and Black/African American students at 40 students. However, these numbers also align closely with the school's overall demographic enrollment patterns. Hispanic students additionally show a notable number of students identified as "at risk" for chronic absenteeism, emphasizing the need for continued culturally responsive family engagement, communication supports, and individualized interventions.

When examining attendance trends by grade level, chronic absenteeism impacts all grade levels relatively equally. Grade 10 has the highest number of chronically absent students at 82 students, followed closely by Grade 9 with 80 students, Grade 12 with 79 students, and Grade 11 with 76 students. This indicates that attendance concerns are not isolated to one student group or transition year, but rather represent a schoolwide challenge requiring comprehensive support systems across all grade levels.

Despite the high numbers, the data reflects signs of progress and improvement compared to previous years. School staff have increased efforts to identify students early, monitor attendance trends more consistently, and provide targeted interventions for students experiencing attendance barriers. These efforts have led to improved awareness, earlier outreach to families, and stronger systems of support for students who are chronically absent or at risk of becoming chronically absent.

Climate - Panorama Survey Data:

STUDENT DATA: Fall 2025

School Safety: 52%

-Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety at school

Teacher-Student Relationship: 38%

-How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the classroom

Sense of Belonging: 27%

-How students feel that they are valued members of the school community

School Climate: 25%

-Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school

STUDENT DATA: Spring 2025

School Safety: 53%

-Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety at school

Teacher-Student Relationship: 41%

-How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the classroom

Sense of Belonging: 30%

-How students feel that they are valued members of the school community

School Climate: 25%

-Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school

STUDENT DATA: Fall 2024

School Safety: 46%

-Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety at school

Teacher-Student Relationship: 44%

-How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the classroom

Sense of Belonging: 29%

-How students feel that they are valued members of the school community

School Climate: 33%

-Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school

STUDENT DATA: Spring 2024

School Safety: 41%

-Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety at school

Teacher-Student Relationship: 44%

-How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the classroom

Sense of Belonging: 25%

-How students feel that they are valued members of the school community

School Climate: N/A

-Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school

TEACHER & STAFF DATA: Spring 2025 ***only given in the Spring*

Well Being: 73%

-Faculty and staff perceptions of their own professional well-being

Teacher-Student Relationship: 71%

-Perceptions of faculty and staff relationships with school leaders

Sense of Belonging: 60%

-How much faculty and staff feel that they are valued members of the school community

School Climate: 50%

-Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school

TEACHER & STAFF DATA: Spring 2024 ***only given in the Spring*

Well Being: 65%

-Faculty and staff perceptions of their own professional well-being

Teacher-Student Relationship: 54%

-Perceptions of faculty and staff relationships with school leaders

Sense of Belonging: 53%

-How much faculty and staff feel that they are valued members of the school community

School Climate: 31%

-Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school

Based on the quantitative data examined throughout the needs assessment process:

1. What does the data indicate about the strengths of the school, students, families, and community?

The data indicates that while the school community demonstrates several strengths, there are also significant and interconnected needs among students, families, and staff that impact overall student success. A primary strength identified across all stakeholder groups is the presence of strong, relationship-based supports. Students consistently reported relying on trusted teachers, coaches, and staff members, and families expressed a general sense of trust when communication is responsive and personal. We are improving on chronically absent students already. We just have to continue to support chronically absent students.

The Panorama Survey data also reflects areas of growth over the past year. Student perceptions of school safety improved from 41% in Spring 2024 to 53% in Spring 2025, indicating that students are beginning to feel safer both physically and psychologically within the school environment. Sense of belonging also increased from 25% in Spring 2024 to 30% in Spring 2025, showing gradual improvement in how students perceive themselves as valued members of the school community. Teacher-student relationships among students remained relatively stable, increasing from 38% in Fall 2025 compared to 41% in Spring 2025, while still demonstrating an ongoing need to strengthen meaningful connections between students and staff. Additionally, teacher and staff survey data demonstrates notable

positive growth from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025. Staff well-being increased from 65% to 73%, sense of belonging increased from 53% to 60%, and perceptions of school climate rose significantly from 31% to 50%. These improvements suggest that efforts to strengthen staff morale, collaboration, and overall school culture are having a positive impact. Teacher and staff perceptions of relationships within the school community also increased from 54% to 71%, highlighting stronger internal collaboration and support systems among adults in the building. Collectively, the data suggests that the school community has strong foundational relationships, dedicated staff, and growing systems of support that can continue to be built upon to improve student connectedness, engagement, attendance, and overall school climate.

2. What does the data indicate about the needs of the school, students, families, and community?

Expanded mental health services and capacity, stronger coordination of support systems, more equitable access to enrichment and extracurricular opportunities, and culturally responsive practices and inclusion efforts remain important priorities. Additionally, expanding existing programs such as the 9th Grade Academy and TRIO/Upward Bound provides meaningful academic and college readiness support for some students. Staff and community partners also demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting students, and many students exhibit resilience as they balance academic responsibilities with work and family obligations. Increased attention to attendance interventions and supports for chronically absent students is also needed to improve student engagement, academic performance, and overall school connectedness.

3. What instructional gaps or needs does the data reveal?

The data further reveals several instructional gaps and areas for improvement. Students expressed a need for more individualized academic support and greater access to academic interventions during the school day. There is also a perceived lack of relevance in some coursework, with students indicating that certain classes are not aligned with real-world applications or career pathways. Additionally, there are gaps in student and family engagement with college and career readiness supports, including SAT preparation, FAFSA assistance, and postsecondary planning resources, despite these opportunities being available through the school and community partners. Attendance concerns and chronic absenteeism also continue to impact instructional continuity, student engagement, and overall academic achievement. While strong instructional and intervention systems are in place for 9th grade students, stakeholders identified a need for more consistent academic, behavioral, and college and career readiness supports for upperclassmen. Stakeholders also emphasized the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices and the need for additional enrichment opportunities that help students connect classroom learning to real-world experiences, careers, and community engagement. Additionally, the need for increased integration of social-emotional learning within instruction was identified as critical to improving both academic performance and behavioral outcomes.

Beyond socioeconomic status, several additional factors contribute to these instructional gaps. Mental health challenges, including anxiety and stress, directly impact students' ability to focus and engage in learning. Attendance issues, often linked to family responsibilities, work obligations, and structural barriers such as transportation and scheduling, further hinder academic progress. Language barriers and cultural differences limit engagement for multilingual and immigrant families, while a lack of representation and inclusive practices affects students' sense of belonging. Additionally, staff capacity and workload constraints limit the ability to provide consistent, high-quality instructional support and interventions.

4. What changes will be needed in instruction to reduce these gaps/needs?

To address these gaps and areas of need, several changes in instructional practices will be necessary. The data suggest a need for increased differentiation and individualized support through the implementation of advisory periods, study halls, intervention blocks, and small-group instruction to provide targeted academic assistance. Instruction should also become more relevant, engaging, and culturally responsive by incorporating career-connected learning opportunities, real-world applications, and enrichment experiences that help students connect classroom learning to future careers and community impact.

Embedding social-emotional learning into daily instruction will be essential to supporting student well-being, improving engagement, and strengthening academic outcomes. Expanding college and career readiness programming across all grade levels, including increased exposure to postsecondary pathways, workforce opportunities, and financial aid resources, will further support long-term student success. Additionally, schools will need to strengthen culturally responsive communication and family engagement strategies to ensure students and families feel informed, valued, and connected to available supports and opportunities.

Providing students with meaningful opportunities for community involvement and service-learning experiences will also help reinforce how their learning can positively impact their communities. Finally, strengthening relationship-based practices within the classroom and school environment will help ensure that every student is connected to a trusted adult who can provide consistent academic, social-emotional, and behavioral support.

5. In what ways does the data align with other data collected?

The findings across stakeholder groups are highly aligned, reinforcing the validity of the data. Students, families, staff, and community partners all identified mental health needs, the importance of relationships, family economic stress, and communication gaps as major factors impacting student success.

6. In what ways does the data contradict other data collected?

Some contradictions exist, while staff reports that support systems are in place, students and families often indicate a lack of awareness or difficulty accessing these resources. Additionally, there is a disconnect between attendance and academic performance, as some students are able to pass courses despite chronic absenteeism. This suggests a need to examine grading practices and engagement strategies more closely at a district level. Focus groups revealed that students frequently rely on individual teachers or coaches rather than formal school systems for support, and many participants reported confusion regarding counseling access, mental health referrals, academic resources, and available community supports. This suggests that although supports exist, communication, coordination, and accessibility may not be consistent across all groups.

There are also some contradictions related to school climate, belonging, and subgroup experiences. Student focus groups and survey data indicated that many students, particularly students from minority and immigrant backgrounds, reported feeling underrepresented, unheard, or less connected to the school community. Students expressed concerns regarding cultural inclusion, equity, and whether all student voices are valued equally within the school environment. At the same time, the chronic absenteeism data shows that White students represent the highest number of chronically absent students within the school population. This suggests that while students from multiple racial and cultural groups may experience concerns related to belonging and school climate, attendance challenges are affecting students across demographic groups and may be more closely tied to broader systemic issues such as mental health, economic stress, transportation barriers, work responsibilities, and family challenges rather than a single factor alone.

7. What additional disaggregation of the data could help identify a root cause for performance gaps?

To better identify root causes of performance gaps, the data could be further broken down by English learner status, first-generation students, and students balancing work responsibilities would help uncover how structural and family-related factors are influencing academic performance.

Additionally, disaggregating by attendance patterns (e.g., chronically absent vs. regularly attending students), participation in extracurricular activities, and access to support services (such as counseling or mentoring) could reveal important trends. Considering the noted challenges with mental health and engagement, analyzing data by students receiving mental health services versus those who are not could also provide insight into gaps in outcomes.

8. What additional questions does the data above raise?

The data raises several important questions about systems, access, and student support:

- How do mental health needs specifically impact attendance and academic performance, and which students are most affected?
- Why are students relying more on individual relationships rather than formal support systems, and how can systems be strengthened?
- Which students are not accessing available services, and what barriers (e.g., stigma, awareness, transportation) are preventing them from doing so?
- How do economic factors such as employment, family responsibilities, and food insecurity directly affect student engagement and achievement?
- Why does support appear to decrease after 9th grade, and how does this impact outcomes for upperclassmen?
- How effective are current communication methods in reaching all families, particularly those facing language or technology barriers?
- What role do cultural inclusion and sense of belonging play in student engagement and performance?
- How are structural barriers (e.g., scheduling, transportation, and limited enrichment opportunities) influencing participation in academic and extracurricular supports?

Feedback from the School Community

Data Collection Methods

- **Surveys:** Utilize pre-existing sample surveys as a base and customize them according to the specific needs of your school community.
 - [Community School Student Survey Sample](#) (Google Form)
 - [Community School Staff Survey Sample](#) (Google Form)
 - [Community School Family Survey Sample](#) (Google Form)
 - [Survey Question in Word](#)
- **Focus Groups:** Conduct group discussions to gather in-depth insights.

- **Interviews:** One-on-one or small group interviews can provide detailed qualitative data.
 - o A bank of sample questions for surveys, focus groups, and interviews can be accessed [here](#).

Key Stakeholders to Interview

1. Students
2. Parents/Caregivers
3. Community Partners
4. School-Based Healthcare Providers
5. Administrators
6. Counselors
7. Judy Center Directors (if applicable)

Topics to Address in Focus Groups and Interviews:

- **Current Strengths and Assets** - What are the school's current strengths? Which resources and programs are most valued by stakeholders?
- **Needs and Challenges** - What are the main challenges faced by the school community? Are there any specific areas that require additional support?
- **Health and Wellness** - What health and wellness services are currently available and utilized? Are there gaps in healthcare services that need to be addressed?
- **Community Engagement** - How engaged are community partners in school activities? What opportunities exist for enhancing community involvement?
- **Student Support Services** - What support services are available to students (e.g., counseling, tutoring)? Are there sufficient resources to address students' emotional and academic needs?
- **Access to Resources** - How accessible are educational resources and extracurricular activities to students? Are there any barriers to accessing these resources?

In the table below, summarize the feedback the various stakeholder groups provided for each topic.

1. What three major themes emerge in the surveys, focus groups, and interview responses?

Three major themes emerged from the surveys, focus groups, and interview responses.

First, all stakeholders consistently identified the need for increased mental health and wellness support for students and families. Students, staff, and families emphasized the importance of accessible behavioral health services, stronger emotional support systems, and preventative mental health programming to address stress, anxiety, and overall well-being.

Second, responses highlighted the importance of building stronger relationships and creating a greater sense of belonging within the school community. Students and families expressed the value of supportive relationships with teachers, staff, mentors, and peers, while staff and partners emphasized the need for increased family engagement, collaboration, and trust between the school and community. Creating a culture where students feel safe, respected, and connected was identified as a major priority.

Third, stakeholders expressed a strong desire for more real-world learning opportunities and community-connected classroom experiences. Students and families specifically requested expanded career exploration, internships, job-shadowing opportunities, STEM activities, college and career readiness programming, and hands-on learning experiences that better prepare students for life after graduation.

Essential Practice	Students	Families	Staff	Partners	Specific Recommendations
Rigorous, Community-Connected Classroom Instruction and Expanded, Enriched Learning Opportunities (e.g., advanced classes, field	The school offers a variety of academic courses and has staff committed to student success. Some opportunities for extracurricular activities and college/career	The school needs to increase student engagement through more hands-on, real-world learning opportunities. Action steps include expanding field trips, integrating STEM and career-based	Community organizations, local businesses, and colleges can provide career exposure, mentorship, internships, and enrichment programming to enhance learning experiences.	Partners can provide enrichment opportunities such as mentoring, career exposure, and hands-on programming but need stronger	Increase access to enrichment programs (field trips, STEM, career exploration), strengthen community partnerships, and provide more engaging, real-world learning opportunities.

Essential Practice	Students	Families	Staff	Partners	Specific Recommendations
trips to extend learning, STEM activities, extended day or year opportunities)	exposure are available.	learning, and increasing access to enrichment programs and extended learning opportunities.		coordination with the school.	
Collaborative Leadership, Shared Power, and Voice (e.g., includes partners, parents, and students in collaborative planning. Information shared with parents and community)	The school has established leadership structures and staff who are invested in student success. Some communication systems with families and stakeholders are in place.	Families reported limited opportunities to provide input and want more consistent communication and inclusion in decision-making.	Staff expressed a need for clearer communication systems and more collaboration across teams.	Partners indicated a need for better communication and inclusion in planning school-wide initiatives.	Create structured opportunities for student voice, increase family input opportunities, and strengthen communication systems across all stakeholders.
Integrated Systems of Support (e.g., various supports are provided to help students and families such as services available at or	Students expressed a desire for more engaging, hands-on learning opportunities, including real-world connections, field trips, and interactive	Families want more opportunities for students to be exposed to college and career pathways and enrichment opportunities but may lack awareness of what is available.	Staff emphasized the importance of relationship-building but noted challenges due to time and competing demands.	Partners can provide enrichment opportunities such as mentoring, career exposure, and hands-on programming but need stronger	Expand mental health services, improve referral systems, increase awareness of resources, and strengthen coordination between school and community partners.

Essential Practice	Students	Families	Staff	Partners	Specific Recommendations
through the school-including physical, mental and behavioral supports)	activities. Some students reported disengagement due to lack of relevance.			coordination with the school.	
Culture of Belonging, Safety, and Care (e.g., students, families and communities feel cared for and respected)	Students want more opportunities to share their voice and feel heard in school decisions. They expressed interest in being involved in shaping school culture and activities.	Families reported limited opportunities to provide input and want more consistent communication and inclusion in decision-making.	Staff expressed a need for clearer communication systems and more collaboration across teams.	Partners indicated a need for better communication and inclusion in planning school-wide initiatives.	Increase opportunities for relationship-building, create safe and inclusive spaces, and implement programs that promote student connection and belonging.
Powerful Student and Family Engagement (e.g., trusting relationships between families, partners, community agencies and the school).	Students want more opportunities to connect with staff and participate in meaningful school activities.	Families identified communication barriers and want more flexible ways to engage with the school.	Staff reported difficulty engaging families consistently and expressed a need for better strategies and tools.	Partners can support engagement efforts but require clearer communication and alignment with school goals.	Improve communication methods, offer flexible engagement opportunities, and strengthen partnerships to increase family and student involvement.

2. To what extent do the survey, focus group, and interview responses reflect the school community? Are all populations and their voices represented? Was translation required to engage specific populations? How do you plan to include missing populations if all groups are not represented?

The survey, focus group, and interview responses reflect a broad portion of the school community; however, not all populations and voices are fully represented. While outreach efforts were intentional, some groups may still be underrepresented due to barriers such as language, access, scheduling, or limited connection to the school.

Surveys were distributed in both English and Spanish to support broader participation. However, additional languages such as Arabic, Vietnamese, and Chinese were not included, which may have limited engagement from families who speak those languages. Moving forward, expanding translation services and outreach efforts to include these and other languages will be important to ensure more inclusive and equitable representation across all populations.

3. How do survey, focus group, and interview results align with and/or contradict attendance and achievement data?

The survey, focus group, and interview results strongly align with the attendance and achievement data collected throughout the needs assessment process. Across all stakeholder groups, students, families, staff, and community partners consistently identified concerns related to school connectedness, student engagement, mental health, motivation, and relationships with adults in the building. These findings directly connect to the school's chronic absenteeism data and ongoing academic challenges.

Student panorama survey data revealed low scores in Sense of Belonging and School Climate, with Sense of Belonging ranging from 25% to 30% over the past two years and School Climate remaining between 25% and 33%. These results closely align with focus group findings, where students reported feeling disconnected from school systems, wanting stronger relationships with counselors and teachers, and expressing concerns about whether student voices are genuinely heard. Students consistently emphasized that trusted relationships with adults were one of the most important factors affecting their engagement and success.

Attendance and achievement data also align with the barriers identified during focus groups and interviews. Students, staff, families, and community partners all described structural and economic challenges contributing to absenteeism, including transportation barriers, work responsibilities, family obligations, mental health concerns, and lack of access to supports. Students reported balancing school with employment responsibilities, while families described difficulties related to work schedules, transportation, and access to resources.

The qualitative data further supports the chronic absenteeism findings by highlighting that attendance concerns are often symptoms of broader systemic and family-related challenges rather than solely student motivation issues. Community partners emphasized that

students are sometimes dealing with food insecurity, caring for siblings, lack of internet access, immigration-related stress, and emotional fatigue, all of which impact attendance and academic performance. Participants across all groups repeatedly emphasized that academic success cannot be separated from mental health, family stability, and access to supportive relationships.

Mental health emerged as one of the strongest themes connecting the qualitative and quantitative data. Students reported long wait times for therapy services, limited counseling access, and lack of awareness regarding available supports. Staff and community partners similarly identified mental health capacity challenges, stigma around seeking help, and fragmented referral systems.

At the same time, the data also reveals several strengths and areas of progress. Teacher and staff survey data showed improvement in staff well-being, school climate, and sense of belonging from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025. Focus group participants also highlighted the success of relationship-based supports such as the 9th Grade Academy, mentoring relationships, TRIO/Upward Bound, and supportive teachers and coaches, and community schools. Families expressed appreciation for responsive staff members and opportunities to build trust through direct communication with administrators, teachers, and coaches.

The findings do not significantly contradict the quantitative data; rather, the qualitative data provides important context and explanation for the trends observed in attendance, engagement, and school climate data. The results consistently indicate that barriers to achievement are systemic and interconnected, involving mental health, transportation, communication, family stress, cultural inclusion, and access to supportive relationships and opportunities.

4. Have the surveys, focus groups, and interviews produced sufficient information about the needs of students, families, and communities? If not, what is missing, and how can the school collect additional information?

The surveys, focus groups, and interviews produced meaningful information regarding the needs of students, families, staff, and the broader community. The data consistently identified several interconnected themes, including mental health concerns, chronic absenteeism, lack of student belonging, family economic stress, transportation barriers, communication gaps, and the importance of trusted relationships with adults. Across all stakeholder groups, there was strong alignment in identifying relationship-based supports, mental health access, and family stability as major factors influencing student engagement, attendance, and academic success. The data also provided valuable insight into strengths within the school community, including supportive staff relationships, successful programs such as TRIO/Upward Bound, and improving staff perceptions of school climate and well-being.

The focus groups provided deeper context behind the quantitative data by helping explain why students may struggle with attendance, disengagement, or academic performance. Students, families, staff, and community partners all emphasized that many barriers to

success are systemic rather than behavioral, including transportation challenges, economic hardship, work responsibilities, lack of access to services, and limited awareness of available supports.

While the data collected was comprehensive and highly informative, there are still areas where additional information may strengthen the needs assessment process. One limitation is that some stakeholder groups had lower participation rates, particularly among families.. The parent focus group included only two participants, which may not fully represent the experiences and perspectives of the broader parent population. Additional outreach may be needed to ensure greater representation from multilingual families, families experiencing economic hardship, immigrant populations, and families who are less connected to the school.

Further information could also be collected regarding specific subgroup experiences, including students receiving special education services, English Learners, migrant families, and students experiencing homelessness or housing instability

What may be missing includes:

- Input from families who do not typically attend school events or respond to surveys
- Representation from all student subgroups (e.g., multilingual learners, students with disabilities, chronically absent students)
- More detailed information about the root causes behind attendance, behavior, or achievement patterns
- Community perspectives from external stakeholders such as employers, local organizations, or faith-based groups
- Longitudinal feedback that shows changes over time rather than a single snapshot

To address these gaps, North Caroline High School can collect additional information by:

- Conducting targeted outreach (phone interviews, home visits, or small group meetings) with underrepresented families
- Offering surveys in multiple languages and multiple formats (paper, digital, text-based)
- Partnering with trusted community organizations to gather feedback from families who may not engage directly with the school
- Hosting listening sessions at flexible times and in community locations outside of school
- Using student voice strategies, such as advisory groups or peer-led focus groups
- Triangulating qualitative data with attendance, discipline, and achievement data to identify which groups are not being heard

Overall, while existing data sources may provide meaningful insight, expanding outreach methods is often necessary to ensure the school has a complete and representative understanding of community needs. At the annual Unity Day, more information was gathered, but as a school, we cannot force students and families to come to community events.

Summary Review of Assets and Needs Assessment Data

Review the data from the assets and needs assessment and complete the following chart. Provide concise responses summarizing the school's assets, opportunities for action, and potential partners that can support the school, students, and families.

Instructions:

1. **School Assets:** Identify and list the strengths and resources currently available within the school community. These might include programs, facilities, staff expertise, community involvement, etc.
2. **Opportunities for Action:** Highlight areas where the school can improve or expand its services to better meet the needs of students and families. This could involve addressing gaps in services, enhancing existing programs, or implementing new initiatives.
3. **Potential Partners:** Suggest organizations, businesses, or community groups that could collaborate with the school to support its goals. These partners can provide additional resources, expertise, or support for identified opportunities.

Essential Practice	What assets does the school have?	What does the school need, and what opportunities or action steps can be taken to address those needs?	Are there potential assets or partners that can contribute to this component?
Rigorous, Community-Connected Classroom Instruction and Expanded, Enriched Learning Opportunities (e.g., advanced classes, field trips to extend	The school has dedicated instructional staff and existing academic programs, including some college and career readiness opportunities (e.g., TRIO, Next Generation Scholars) and Job Fairs. There are limited extracurricular and enrichment	Students expressed a need for more engaging, hands-on learning experiences and real-world connections. Families want increased exposure to college and career pathways but may not be aware of available opportunities. Staff identified challenges with student engagement and attendance impacting rigor. Action steps include expanding field trips, career-connected learning, STEM opportunities, extended learning time (after school/summer), and increasing awareness of existing programs.	Community partners such as local businesses, colleges (Chesapeake College, Salisbury University), and organizations can provide internships, job shadowing, mentorship, and career exposure opportunities. Existing partners like TRIO and Next Generation Scholars can be leveraged further to expand access.

Essential Practice	What assets does the school have?	What does the school need, and what opportunities or action steps can be taken to address those needs?	Are there potential assets or partners that can contribute to this component?
learning, STEM activities, extended day or year opportunities)	opportunities currently available.		
Collaborative Leadership, Shared Power, and Voice (e.g., includes partners, parents, and students in collaborative planning. Information shared with parents and community)	The school has leadership structures in place and a committed staff. There are some existing communication systems used to share information with families and stakeholders.	Students want more opportunities to share their voice and be involved in decision-making. Families reported limited opportunities for input and want more consistent communication. Staff expressed a need for clearer communication systems and stronger collaboration across teams. Action steps include creating student advisory groups, increasing family input opportunities, improving communication systems, and ensuring transparency in decision-making processes.	Families, students, and community partners can serve on advisory councils or leadership teams. Community partners can also support engagement efforts and help facilitate collaborative planning opportunities.
Integrated Systems of Support (e.g., various supports are provided to help students and families such as services available at or through the	The school has existing student support staff (counselors, PPW, etc.) and partnerships that provide mental health, behavioral health, and basic needs support (e.g., Choptank Health, Behavioral Health, DSS).	The school needs more streamlined and coordinated systems for identifying and referring students to services. There is also a need to increase awareness of available supports and expand mental health capacity. Action steps include improving referral systems, implementing coordinated case management, increasing visibility of services, and expanding access to mental health and basic needs supports.	Community agencies, mental health providers including Choptank Community Health and Caroline County Behavioral health, and social service organizations can expand supports, including counseling, case management, and basic needs assistance.

Essential Practice	What assets does the school have?	What does the school need, and what opportunities or action steps can be taken to address those needs?	Are there potential assets or partners that can contribute to this component?
school-including physical, mental and behavioral supports)			
Culture of Belonging, Safety, and Care (e.g., students, families and communities feel cared for and respected)	Staff demonstrate strong care and commitment to students, and positive relationships exist within the school community. Some programs and activities support student connection and inclusivity.	There is a need to strengthen school-wide efforts to ensure all students feel seen, valued, and supported, particularly among diverse student populations. Action steps include implementing relationship-building structures (advisory/mentoring), increasing culturally responsive practices, creating safe spaces, and expanding inclusive programming and student-led groups.	Community partners and organizations focused on youth development can support programs that promote belonging, mentorship, and positive school culture, for example Minary's Dream Alliance, Wraparound MD, and, The parents' place of Maryland. All of these community resources provide family and youth development.
Powerful Student and Family Engagement (e.g., trusting relationships between families, partners, community agencies and the school).	The school has communication tools and some family engagement efforts in place. Staff are committed to building relationships with families.	Families face barriers to engagement, including transportation, work schedules, and communication gaps. There is a need for more consistent, flexible, and inclusive engagement strategies. Action steps include improving communication methods (multi-platform), offering flexible event times, increasing outreach to underrepresented families, and providing more accessible opportunities for involvement.	Community organizations and family support agencies can assist with outreach, provide resources, and help connect families to the school. Partners can also support events, resource distribution, and family engagement initiatives. Minary's Dream Alliance could possibly do family engagement nights at North Caroline High school.

Summary

Based on the Information and data collected during the assets and needs assessment process, list the school's greatest strengths and weaknesses to be addressed in the Implementation plan.

Strengths:

1. Strong relationship-based school culture – Students, families, and staff consistently identified trusted relationships with teachers, coaches, and staff as a key strength and protective factor for student success.
2. Established community partnerships and support services – The school has multiple partnerships providing mental health, academic, and enrichment support (e.g., TRIO, Next Generation Scholars, Behavioral Health), creating a solid foundation to build upon.
3. The Community around North Caroline High wants our students to succeed inside and outside of school.
4. Committed staff and existing support structures – Staff demonstrate dedication to student success, with systems like the 9th Grade Academy and student support teams already in place to identify and assist students.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of parent involvement/ engagement in school. Communication gaps and inconsistent family engagement – Students and families are often unaware of available resources, and engagement is limited by communication barriers, work schedules, and lack of accessible outreach method
2. Lack of staff participation.
3. Structural Limitations.
4. Barriers to student engagement and access to opportunities Transportation, scheduling, and economic challenges limit participation in after-school programs, enrichment opportunities, and consistent attendance.
5. Not all cultures feel welcomed in the school environment.

Assets and Needs Assessment Infographic: Beginning in the fiscal year 2025, each community school will be required to publish a summary of their findings online. An infographic template can be accessed [here](#), and community school leaders are encouraged to complete the infographic and post it to their school's website by **August 1, 2026**.

What additional assistance do you need in order to create your implementation plan? N/A

Assets and Needs Assessment Completion Rubric

Community School Coordinators can use this rubric to assess the completeness and quality of the Assets and Needs Assessment in a standardized manner. Each section should be carefully reviewed, and the appropriate level (Evident, Partially Evident, Not Evident) should be assigned based on the criteria described below.

	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Asset Map	A comprehensive map identifies all community assets, such as businesses, healthcare facilities, and community organizations. Detailed labels and locations are provided.	Some community assets were identified, but the map lacks detail or descriptive labels.	The asset map is missing or lacks sufficient detail to identify community assets.
Partnership Inventory	Conduct a complete inventory of existing partnerships, including descriptions of contributions and populations served.	Inventory includes some partners but lacks detail or completeness. Some descriptions or roles may be unclear or missing.	Partnership inventory is missing or lacks significant information about existing partnerships.
Community School Steering Committee Membership	Create a clear and comprehensive list of steering committee members inclusive of school and district-based staff, families, and community partners.	The list of members is incomplete or lacks broad representation.	No list of steering committee members exists.
Quantitative Data Analysis	A thorough analysis of data, including attendance, state assessments, school-level performance data, and school climate data.	Some data is analyzed, but the analysis is incomplete.	No analysis of data or the analysis provided is insufficient.

August 2025

Feedback from the School Community	There is a comprehensive collection of feedback from students, parents, school leaders, teachers, and community members. Various methods of feedback collection (surveys, interviews, focus groups) are evident and represent the demographics of the school community.	Feedback was collected from some, but not all, stakeholders. Limited methods of feedback collection are used.	Minimal or no feedback was collected from the school community.
Summary Review of Feedback	A clear and detailed summary of the feedback collected, highlighting key themes or insights.	The summary of feedback is provided but lacks detail or misses critical themes.	No summary of feedback or the summary provided is insufficient.
Summary	A comprehensive summary that integrates findings, providing clear conclusions and actionable recommendations.	The summary covers key findings but lacks actionable recommendations.	No summary is provided, or the summary is insufficient and does not integrate findings.