Comprehensive Distance Learning: Engaging Community-Based Organizations

A **Community-Based Organization** (CBO) is one that is driven by and representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and works to meet community needs and amplify strengths. For example, see **ODE’s African-American Black Student Success Plan**.

CBOs focus on priority issues and solutions, as determined by the community, which can include - health care, environmental sustainability, quality of education, access to technology, access to spaces and information for people experiencing disabilities.

CBOs can:

- Offer specific and important insights into the challenges and opportunities facing school districts, helping to improve district ability to communicate and connect with a wide range of community members.
- Support authentic and meaningful engagement.
- Help education leaders identify and listen to missing or needed perspectives; building trust and responding to community needs and assets can increase the collective efficacy of the community through district partnerships.

When districts and CBOs engage as genuine partners and collaborate around co-created goals, Community-Based Organizations help districts to:

- Expand education and outreach capacity to center family and student voice.
- Deepen trust and build shared understanding within the local community.
- Leverage culturally specific resources.
- Develop patterns for two-way communication to include and value culture and language(s).
- Sustain connection with other local services and providers.
- Provide enhanced services to students.

Examples of CBO and district partnerships include working together on budgeting and priority-setting, family and community engagement, translation, tutoring supports, and developing wrap-around resources. Local CBOs are critical partners in enhancing the breadth and depth of participation by community residents in local decision-making and in serving students and families. This is especially important in times of crisis or emergency, such as extended school closures during COVID-19.

**Resources**

- **Student Success Act (SSA) Engagement Toolkit**
- **Governor’s Office on SSA Community Planning and Engagement**
- **Partnering with Community-Based Organizations**

Community-Based organizations provide a range of critical services for students and families across Oregon communities. Depending on community needs and strengths, CBOs services may include family engagement, mental and physical health outreach, targeted social-emotional or academic supports, and/or translation services or other culturally or linguistically-responsive supports.