

Distance Learning for All: Engaging Community-Based Organizations¹

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.

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.

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.

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](#)

¹ Please note: further guidance around engaging CBOs will be forthcoming that expands on resources, research, and recommendations.