

Building schedules for remote community educators in 5 steps



We define community educators as talented adults from the broader community who bring additional capacity, insight and expertise to classrooms. They include working professionals, retirees, veterans, former educators, family members and others with valuable skills who can support the efforts of educators. They may be part-time or full-time, paid or unpaid.

As schools build teams of educators with distributed expertise, and especially as they increase the number of community educators on their teams, scheduling becomes an increasingly complex task. Below, you'll find five actionable steps for building schedules for remote community educators that are responsive to student and team needs and maximize community educators' skills and talents.

Note that while our recommendations are framed at the school level, they could easily be adapted to grade-level teams, multi-grade teams and cross-grade departmental teams.

1: Define desired roles

Identify students' needs (e.g., project mentor, literacy accelerator, wellness coach), and use these to define the roles remote community educators might fill. For roles inspiration, see our companion piece on [new support roles for educator teams in online and hybrid settings](#).

For each role, develop an agreed-upon, school-wide role name and role definition.

Example role name and definition

Role name	Role definition
Project mentor	Use skills like positive questioning and problem-solving in order to mentor and coach students in their work on independent or small-group projects

[Click here](#) to create your own copy of a Google Sheet formatted to capture this information efficiently, with collaboration from multiple stakeholders.

2: Identify time slots

Are all roles appropriate for all times of day, every day? Consider coming to agreement as a school about when community educators will support teams, and standardizing that schedule across all teams (e.g., morning and afternoon, daily; 8–10 a.m. and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays). While this isn't a requirement, it will make scheduling much easier.

3: Identify team-level needs

Using the roles, definitions and time slots agreed upon at the school level, inventory teams to determine which community educator roles would be beneficial to their teams, how many community educators they might like to fill each role, and when a community educator might fill this role.

Example team-level needs inventories

Team A

Role	Mon 8-10	Mon 12-1	Tues 8-10	Tues 12-1	Wed 8-12	Wed 12-1	Thurs 8-10	Thurs 12-1	Fri 8-10	Fri 12-1
Project mentor										
Technology trouble-shooter	1		1		1		1		1	
Math accelerator										
Literacy accelerator	2		2				2		2	
Wellness coach										
Student success coach	1		1		1		1		1	
Lunch club captain		1		1		1		1		1

Team A would benefit from one technology troubleshooter every morning; two literacy accelerators every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; one student success coach every morning; and one lunch club captain every day at lunch time.

Team B

Role	Mon 8-10	Mon 12-1	Tues 8-10	Tues 12-1	Wed 8-12	Wed 12-1	Thurs 8-10	Thurs 12-1	Fri 8-10	Fri 12-1
Project mentor					4					
Technology trouble-shooter										
Math accelerator	1		1				1		1	
Literacy accelerator	1		1				1		1	
Wellness coach										
Student success coach	1		1		1		1		1	
Lunch club captain										

Team B would benefit from four project mentors every Wednesday morning; one math accelerator and one literacy accelerator every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday morning; and one student success coach every morning.

4: Inventory community educators' availability and skill sets

Collaborate with partner organizations and/or individual community educators to identify when each community educator is available to provide support to school-based teams. Additionally, invite community educators to share their relative levels of confidence with respect to the school's identified needs and roles.

Example community educator survey

Availability											
Name	Mon 8-10	Mon 12-1	Tues 8-10	Tues 12-1	Wed 8-12	Wed 12-1	Thurs 8-10	Thurs 12-1	Fri 8-10	Fri 12-1	Availability Notes
Name 1	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Can do both times
Name 2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Can give up to 3h on one day
Name 3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Available full-time

Match with Your Skill Sets							
Name	Project mentor	Technology trouble-shooter	Math accelerator	Literacy accelerator	Wellness coach	Student success coach	Lunch club captain
Name 1	1 - Low	1 - Low	1 - Low	3 - High	3 - High	3 - High	3 - High
Name 2	3 - High	3 - High	3 - High	1 - Low	3 - High	2 - Med	2 - Med
Name 3	2 - Med	2 - Med	2 - Med	2 - Med	2 - Med	3 - High	2 - Med

5: Build out schedules

Consider team-level inventories alongside community educators' availability and skill sets in order to create schedules at the team level that identify which community educators will be present when, and what roles they will fill.

To support community educators in building meaningful relationships with students, consider limiting the number of teams across which any community educator works.

Example community educator schedules

Team A

Role	Mon 8-10	Tues 8-10	Tues 12-1	Wed 12-1	Thurs 8-10	Thurs 12-1	Fri 8-10
Technology troubleshooter		Name 20			Name 20		
Literacy accelerator	Name 6 & Name 17	Name 6 & Name 17			Name 6 & Name 17		Name 6 & Name 17
Wellness coach			Name 17	Name 17		Name 17	
Student success coach	Name 13	Name 13					

Team A will work with four different community educators:

- One community educator (Name 20) will serve as a technology troubleshooter on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
- A second community educator (Name 6) will serve as a literacy accelerator Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings.
- A third community educator (Name 17) who had high availability and several skills to share will fill two roles, serving as a literacy accelerator Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and serving as a wellness coach Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during lunch hour.
- Finally, a fourth community educator (Name 13) will serve as a student success coach on Monday and Tuesday mornings.

Team B

Role	Mon 8-10	Tues 8-10	Wed 8-12	Thurs 8-10	Fri 8-10
Project mentor			Name 2 & Name 8		
Math accelerator		Name 16		Name 16	
Student success coach	Name 8	Name 8		Name 8	Name 8

Team B will work with three different community educators:

- One community educator (Name 2) will serve as a project mentor Wednesday mornings.
- A second community educator (Name 8) will fill two roles, serving as a project mentor Wednesday mornings and a student success coach Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings.
- Finally, a third community educator (Name 16) will serve as a math accelerator Tuesday and Thursday mornings.