

ADVANCING DIGITAL EQUITY: BRIGHT SPOTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

As schools, communities, and programs work together to identify strategies for closing the digital divide, wraparound/integrated student support providers and student success coaches can be engaged to support increased adoption of reliable, high-speed broadband. Individuals and organizations carrying out these roles can leverage their in-depth understanding of community-specific needs and trusted relationships with youth and families to integrate digital inclusion services with supports they already provide and help students thrive in school and beyond.

Across the field of education and youth development, innovative practices are being implemented by schools, districts, and community-based organizations to ensure our young people can fully participate in their education and society. Below are examples of the work led by national, regional, and community-based organizations.

Creating Opportunities for Reaching Young People to Build Digital Skills and Credentials: Boys & Girls Clubs of America's MyFuture Platform

[MyFuture](#), Boys & Girls Clubs of America's youth-facing digital platform, merges online connections with real-world growth opportunities. Crafted for today's youth, MyFuture offers a secure space for diverse activities such as completing projects, badge earning, contest participation, and certifications. Guided by Boys & Girls Clubs youth development professionals, the platform reaches across more than 5,200 communities connected to local Boys & Girls Clubs and Military Youth Centers, making engagement open to all.





In 2021, 294,000 activities were completed on the platform, positively impacting many young individuals. Moreover, 94,598 Club members embraced the National Arts programs on the platform in 2022, showcasing its ability to foster creativity, skill development, and expression in digital spaces.

Boys & Girls Clubs staff members have embraced MyFuture's potential year over year. Over 5,000 staff members have been trained to guide and inspire youth within this digital platform. With a selection of over 500 unique activities, MyFuture empowers Clubs to inspire young leaders, foster peer-to-peer connections, and promote holistic growth within a secure virtual space. The platform is open to all youth, not just current members.

Connecting Community Resources to Increase Access and Support Remote Learning: Communities In Schools Nevada

In 2020, Nevada developed the [“Connecting Kids” public-private partnership](#) between districts, charter schools, the state department of education, community-based organizations, state and local organizations, and the business community to ensure 100 percent of learners had access to digital tools and resources to fully participate in learning. To further support these efforts, Communities In Schools Nevada (CIS-NV) collaborated with the Clark County School District to open the Connecting Kids Nevada Virtual Family Support Center and assist community members in navigating and registering for subsidized internet or internet hotspots, made possible by partnerships with Cox Communications and T-Mobile.





The CIS-NV staff operating the support center—who had already built trusted relationships with families, caregivers, and other community-based organizations through their work as wraparound student support coordinators—were able to increase buy-in among the community and reduce barriers to adoption. Staff implemented feedback to problem solve and co-create meaningful, personalized solutions for community members seeking to learn about and register for various technology services.

In total, the Family Support Center successfully connected 18,000 families to reliable, high-speed broadband and has fielded over 45,000 calls to increase adoption. When in-person school resumed, the Family Call center transitioned operations to the Clark County School District and is still open for learners and caregivers. You can read more about this innovative partnership on the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Technology's [story engine](#).

Building Public-Private Partnerships to Advance Digital Adoption: City Year and AT&T's The Achievery

To help students continue their learning beyond the classroom and build skills they need to thrive in college and careers, AT&T created a free online learning platform to provide K-12 students with engaging content paired with learning activities. The [AT&T Achievery Platform](#) is designed to make online learning more engaging, entertaining, and inspiring for all students through stories that spark curiosity and content that entertains and teaches. [City Year](#)—a student success coaching organization fueled by [AmeriCorps](#) that takes a holistic approach to helping young people thrive academically, socially, and emotionally—is collaborating with AT&T to offer a pilot integration of The Achievery Platform into its program.



Specifically, City Year student success coaches in 10 cities will leverage the AT&T Achievery Platform to bring engaging digital learning experiences to students in the afterschool space and during math tutoring sessions. This partnership offers the opportunity to enhance supports provided by student success coaches and expand access to digital learning experiences for thousands of students.

Supporting Digital Navigators in Local Communities: Comcast and YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago

Digital literacy has never been more important to performing everyday functions, from paying bills to applying for jobs to learning about the world. The YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago recognizes that in an increasingly technological world, closing the digital divide is essential to strengthening communities and connecting people to the resources necessary for social and economic mobility. As a trusted community hub and asset, the YMCA creates a welcoming environment that empowers all individuals to access the tools they need to get connected.

In partnership with Comcast, the YMCA works to close the digital divide through Tech Hubs at six YMCA locations: Irving Park, Kelly Hall, Lake View, McCormick, Radner Family, and South Side. Tech Hubs are open to all community members, regardless of previous affiliation with the YMCA. As part of Comcast's investment, the company also launched Lift Zones, Wi-Fi connected safe spaces within YMCA Tech Hubs. Lift Zones have empowered community members to learn digital skills, find jobs, complete online homework, and much more—supporting the growth and development of Chicagoland communities and investing in the next generation.

Additionally, the YMCA's Bilingual Community Help Desk provides a direct point of contact for community members seeking internet access, digital literacy skills, and tech support, among other resource needs. What first began in 2020 as a partnership with Chicago Public Schools and Kids First Chicago to help students access online learning grew to be the Bilingual Communities Help Desk, a free, trusted resource for Chicagoland community members, including individuals who may not be able to access YMCA Tech Hub locations.

What is Digital Equity?

Learn more about Digital Equity in this NPSS Support Hub Resource.

[Read Here >](#)

What is a Digital Navigator?

Learn more about Digital Navigators in this NPSS Support Hub Resource.

[Read Here >](#)

This toolkit was developed by a digital equity working group of the National Partnership for Student Success Support Hub at the Johns Hopkins Everyone Graduates Center with support from the following contributors: AVID | Boys and Girls Clubs of America | City Year | Communities In Schools Nevada | InnovateEDU | YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago

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