

# FOUR OAKS

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

The Community Support Specialist (CSS) role is a position hired and supervised by Four Oaks, and then placed within the partner school district.

The CSS acts as a bridge between schools and community-based services and supports. This person connects with the family of “referred” students, builds relationships, and completes an assessment using Four Oaks matrix to determine with the family community-based services that could help meet their needs (therapy, BHIS, housing, basic needs, medical, medication management, etc.).

The CSS is trained by the Four Oaks Education team in practices such as Trauma-Informed Care trainings, Restorative Practices, Youth Mental Health First Aid, the Neurosequential Model, and resource network building.

Four Oaks currently has Community Support Specialist positions in Cedar Rapids Community School District, Fairfield Community School District, Fort Madison Community School District, and West Des Moines Community School District.



If you are interested in this service, please contact Megan Isenberg at [misenberg@fouroaks.org](mailto:misenberg@fouroaks.org).



### Generally speaking, the following steps apply to implementing a CSS position in a partner school district:

Employment search, interview, and hiring process begins about 3-6 months before the start of the CSS role in the partner district.

i.e.:

- **Jan-March:** position posted and screen candidates
- **March-May:** Offer made and accepted and transition begins
- **May-August:** New hire on-boarding and training occurs
- **August:** begin role as CSS in the partner school district when school begins

By the start of the school year, the partner district designates a “point of contact” at the district for the CSS to regularly check in with (not formally supervise, but help CSS with orientation and meeting district contacts, available to answer district questions, and the CSS provide regular updates to throughout the school year).

During summer months, CSS provides in home supports to identified families and works to keep kids engaged and meeting basic needs (summer meals, childcare programs, safety checks to homes, etc.).

### What are the primary duties of a Community Support Specialist?

- **Attend district Learning Supports, Tier 2/3 meetings, counselor meetings** as designated by district leadership. In these meetings, the CSS offers input/consultation to the team about services/supports available to kids/families who may be brought to the team due to MH or trauma concerns. These students become the “referrals” for supportive services.
- **After meetings** - CSS would connect with family of “referred” students. Build relationships and complete assessment using Four Oaks matrix and determine with the family community-based services (therapy, BHIS, housing, basic needs, medical, medication management) that could help meet their needs
- **CSS makes needed referrals** and ensures that the family has support to access (such as visiting family at home, helping family complete required paperwork, calling providers with family, attending initial meetings for services, etc.)
- **CSS would track all referrals** and services engagement and provide case management helping families continue services towards stability
- **Attend home visits, appointments, and regular meetings** with families as needed to ensure participation in ongoing supportive services
- At any given time, the CSS may have up to 25 kids/families they are supporting in this way - and sharing with the referring school team, progress updates regularly through LST/Tier meetings etc.