

## **SCUSD Form B: Project Abstract - 2021–22 CCSPP**

### **Vision**

The Guiding Principle of the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) is that “all students are given an equal opportunity to graduate with the greatest number of postsecondary choices from the widest array of options.” To actualize that directive, five SCUSD schools in South Sacramento formed a Community Schools network, applied for, and were awarded a Community Schools grant in 2020. The five school sites represent an elementary to middle to high school feeder pattern in a high-poverty area of South Sacramento. Each school site serves as a community hub within its neighborhood and shares many resources among all schools.

This grant application will expand our existing Community Schools to four SCUSD regions anchored by a comprehensive high school and feeder middle and/or K-8 school. Feeder elementary schools will participate in their respective Community Schools networks, bringing supports and matching dollars. One high school (Luther Burbank) and K-8 school (John Still) participated in the South Sacramento network and will be named in this current grant opportunity as well, with an additional feeder middle school added to its network. The grant opportunity will expand one network and establish three new networks. The networks align closely to SCUSD Trustee area boundaries 1,4,5 and 6.

The vision of all SCUSD Community Schools networks is to create welcoming community hubs which engage, support and strengthen students, families and neighborhoods -- hubs that are sustained by strong family, schools, and community partnerships. Our Community Schools will work toward elevating the assets and meeting the needs of children by building a positive school climate through trusting relationships, combined with rich learning opportunities that prepare all students to succeed in life.

### **Participating Sites**

The proposed Community Schools networks include Luther Burbank High, Fern Bacon Middle, and John Still K-8 (Area 4), Hiram Johnson High and Will C Wood Middle (Area 5), CK McClatchy High and California Middle (Area1), and John F. Kennedy High School and Rosa Parks K-8 (Area 6). Each of the nine sites has Unduplicated Pupil Counts of over 50%; six are well over 80%.

Schools in each of the four Community Schools networks are identified as having the highest need based on the Student Services Equity Index. The Student Services Equity Index uses school data with a weighted formula to identify the schools most in need of student support services. Factors used are school enrollment, number of students identified as socio-economically disadvantaged, at risk of students being commercially

sexually exploited, chronic absenteeism rate, and suspension rate. Using the weighted formula with each of these factors, schools are ranked in most need to less need for support services.

SCUSD Community Schools networks will align with the four pillars of the Community Schools model. Each network already serves as a community hub within its neighborhood and shares many resources among its feeder schools. This funding opportunity will provide resources needed to more fully implement each of these pillars.

**Integrated Support Services:** SCUSD has a quarter-century history of a well-established District and school-based system for referring students for mental health screening, assessment consultation, and/or treatment. Site-based Student Support Centers provide school-based mental health services and case management to link students and families to local resources for a myriad of basic needs and physical/mental/behavioral health needs. Services include basic needs assistance; case management and home visitation; crisis intervention; mental health counseling; suicide prevention; mentoring and tutoring; LGBTQ support services; homeless student services; school climate and bullying prevention; Social and Emotional Learning supports; foster youth services; targeted programs for young women and men of color; targeted programs for unduplicated student groups. Staff works closely with site administrators, staff, Expanded Learning providers, students and families to provide an array of services specific to each network's needs and interests.

This funding opportunity would allow us to sustain and replicate that central coordination model at the Community Schools network school sites. Youth and Family Mental Health Advocates will be hired at all nine sites to assist students and families in addressing barriers that prevent access to needed mental health services, especially trauma-informed care. An important role of the Advocate is to collaborate with students and families, site and District staff and community service providers to identify and address gaps in service. Additional hours for nurses at the Community School sites will also be included in grant funding.

**Family and Community Empowerment (Engagement)** is included as one of the goals in the Sacramento City Unified School District's (SCUSD) LCAP. The focus of the District's Family and Community Empowerment (FACE) Department is to provide SCUSD parents/guardians with the knowledge and tools needed to be active and equal partners in their student's education, District and school site decision making.

Community schools network school sites are building the capacity of parents and staff to support student achievement by providing education, tools to navigate the system, and relationship-building strategies. Included are actions that provide increased access to bilingual staff, translated materials, and SCUSD staff who are well-versed in effective models for parent engagement who will enable and develop parent leaders. Nearly all sites also participate in the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project (PTHV), a high-impact

family engagement strategy designed to build trusting home-school partnerships centered on shared hopes and dreams. Recent studies reveal that PTHV's model for relational home visits strengthens relationships, shifts mindsets, improves teaching, and bolsters student outcomes.

**Collaborative Leadership Practices:** The Coordination of Services Team (COST) at each school site (in collaboration with school staff) identifies the student's academic, social/emotional, and attendance needs and assists to develop educational plans to meet those needs. The COST is a multidisciplinary team approach (many values, perspectives, ideas) that utilizes shared problem-solving strategies to help support students/families with complex needs. The team requires shared responsibility and open communication in the form of collaboration and coordination. The team consists of administrators, Student Support Center staff, school counselors, Expanded Learning program staff, school safety personnel, parent advisors, community partners and other members as needed. The team is school- and community-based with flexibility to adjust the team in response to the perceived needs of referred students, families and the community.

Facilitated by the District's MTSS Student Attendance & Engagement Director, six of nine Community Schools network sites have been trained in and participate in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. All schools will be practicing MTSS by the 22-23 school year. District schools also practice Universal Design for Learning, a teaching approach that works to accommodate the needs and abilities of all learners and eliminates unnecessary hurdles in the learning process,

SCUSD supports professional development to transform school culture and climate. Facilitated by the District's Social and Emotional Learning team, staff in each of the nine Community Schools participate in Epoch anti-bias professional development, Mindful Schools practices, and Restorative Justice practices.

This grant opportunity will allow SCUSD to hire a Community Schools Coordinator who will oversee the overall management, coordination, development, and implementation of the Community Schools networks. An important role of the Coordinator will be to organize, participate in, and/or conduct family involvement programs focused on such issues as health, literacy, parent engagement, school programs, and community resources; manage community outreach activities to engage low-performing and at-risk students, parents, and other family members.

**Expanded Learning:** Through 21st Century and ASSETs grant funding and site funding, eight of the nine Community Schools network schools contract with Certificated teachers, staff and community partners to provide Expanded Learning opportunities during the school year and summer. CARES funding supports expanded learning opportunities at CK McClatchy High School. Community partners provide expanded

learning activities at school sites, including Sacramento-based Sacramento Chinese Community Service Center, Rose Family Creative Empowerment Center, and Empowering Possibilities Unlimited.

### **Community Engagement**

At the District level, the Student Support and Health Services Director and Coordinator oversee the school-site based Student Support Services teams. Instructional Assistant Superintendents work closely with school site principals and the Student Support and Health Services Department to ensure that services are coordinated at the Community Schools network sites. The District's Expanded Learning team works closely with contracted community partners to provide expanded learning activities at sites. SCUSD's Family and Community Empowerment Office provides training, information and technical assistance to assist schools in the creation of effective school-family partnerships.

SCUSD and the schools participating in the Community Schools networks have deep partnerships within the school and Sacramento communities. Partnerships and services are coordinated through Student Support Center staff at each of the school sites. County and community partnerships for resources and referrals include Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services, Child Protective Services, River Oak Center for Children; Another Choice Another Chance; La Familia Counseling Center; WellSpace Health school-based health center; WEAVE; Sacramento Children's Home, Capitol Star, Dignity Health, and Stanford Youth Solutions. Community partners such as Capital Christian Center and Elevate Church, Shoes that Fit, and River City Food Bank provide food, clothing and household items for families in need.

Students receive mentoring and academic assistance through City Year, Pro Youth, and the District's Men's and Women's Leadership Academy programs. Improve Your Tomorrow, a local non-profit, provides personalized mentoring and college-guidance services to high school students. Students and families receive additional mental health mentoring and case management support through a long-standing partnership with a number of local universities, such as Sacramento State University and a host of other universities, providing internship placements for college students earning a Bachelor or Master's degree in Social Work. School staff and teachers connect with families in becoming equal partners in their students' education through the non-profit Parent Teacher Home Visit Project.

Professional development opportunities and programmatic supports for SSC staff and COST team members on evidence-based strategies will be offered to develop trusting, inclusive, and collaborative relationships with families and community members. In addition to the impacts and trauma our SCUSD community has experienced due to

COVID-19, many of our students, families and staff continue to experience ongoing trauma as a result of systemic racism and violence. Recent racist acts of violence against Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, follow centuries of oppression. All Student Support Services staff participated in over 20 hours each of professional development in Healing Centered Engagement (HCE) through Flourish Agenda, an asset-based and culturally-rooted approach to healing and well-being for young people of color and their adult allies. At the end of the 2020-21 school year, all Student Support Services staff became certified as Healing Centered Engagement practitioners.

Depending on the needs of the Community Schools network, grant funding will be allocated to community partners to assist with a variety of student needs, providing female mentors for student support groups; mentoring for students who are gang involved or at risk for gang involvement; providing educational interventions that increase students' knowledge about the dangers of drug use, while also building supportive connections with them; enhancing communication with Marshallese families about the importance of school attendance; and offering culturally responsive services and outreach in Dari and Pashto to our Afghan students, among other strategies.

### **Reflection and Assessment**

The District and school sites utilize an Early Identification and Intervention system (EIS) to identify students who are struggling as early as possible so that we can take action to directly support them. This is the core of the District's equity, access and social justice guiding principle of ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to graduate with the greatest number of postsecondary choices from the widest array of options. In partnership with UC Merced and SCUSD's Continuous Improvement and Accountability Office, SSS's Student Support division created a "Student Support Database" within EIS to document all student support referrals, assessments, contacts and interventions, merging the principles of continuous improvements with the ethics of confidentiality and evidence-based practice. Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected by the SSS Student Support Center Specialist and entered into the Student Support Database. The COST team at each site in the Community Schools networks will meet weekly to review data.

SCUSD will contract with LPC Consulting Associates, Inc, an external evaluator with a long history of working with the District, to evaluate our work and assess progress towards program goals. Throughout the five-year grant period, Community Schools networks will monitor and assess how effectively and meaningfully they engage students, teachers, families, and community partners; establish and expand partnerships, supports, and services that intentionally address locally-defined needs; expand student-centered teaching practices and enrichment opportunities during and out of school time; enhance positive, supportive, inclusive, and racially just school

climates through relationship building, positive behavioral supports, and restorative practices; demonstrate collaborative leadership and shared decision-making (inclusive of students, families, teachers, site administrators, and community partners); and develop the systems and practices necessary to maintain the positive outcomes of the CCSPP.

LPC staff will work with District staff to identify quantitative and qualitative data to represent both process and outcome measures, and data collection strategies. LPC will include interviews or focus groups with key staff, stakeholders, and program participants (if possible) to help understand and interpret quantitative data findings and help with meaning-making and understanding nuances in the data.

The LPC team will provide an evaluation work plan that will include process and outcome research questions, the logic model, identified data needs and strategies for collecting this data, interview and focus group protocols, and a comprehensive work plan outlining tasks and a schedule for completion. In addition, LPC staff may develop a simple data tracking system in Google to gather data collected for this evaluation.

LPC will develop a system for standardized reporting, enhanced by the use of visual graphics to illustrate trends and communicate with a variety of audiences. The reporting frequency and format will be determined during the evaluation planning phase and may be refined over time as needed. The LPC team envisions semi-annual or annual data briefs, possibly site level, that use visuals to share findings, as well as an annual report that includes cumulative findings from data collection to assess progress toward process and outcome goals. These data briefs and reports will be designed in an easy to read and understand, shareable format, using data visualization processes to translate findings. These methods will assist the collaborative in an ongoing understanding and assessment of the school-wide continuous improvement through the Community Schools initiative.

Community Schools networks will fully engage their respective communities by providing opportunities to discuss data and program reports and offer feedback on activities and services. Implementation plans will be updated each year of the grant year. Sustainability plans will be developed during the grant program's first year and updated as needed.