

2015 QTEA Impact Application

Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy

Award amount: \$30,000.00

- Describe your strategies, projects, and/or practices. Tell us who your focal student groups are, what the strategy is, and how it supports or aligns to the Six Strategies for Success and Vision 2025 Essentials

Our focal student group will be our underperforming/underserved African American students. Quantitative data from the available assessments for the 2014-2015 school year gives a clear picture that we are failing our African American students at our school. African American student test scores reflect a level of proficiency markedly below that of the general population, and especially their white peers. For example, 62% of African American students measure not proficient in ELA, compared to only 21% of white students. 91% of African American students are not proficient in mathematics --a rate that is nearly double white students (see Table 1).

We know that the SBAC results for 2014 is a benchmark and cannot necessarily be compared with other schools throughout California or SFUSD. However, we can assume that each of our African American students had a testing experience (administration, setting, classroom, etc.) comparable to all other students in the school. Therefore, when comparing the results of our African American students to the results of our overall student population and to the results of our White students, we can see that our African American students are extremely less likely to be proficient in both ELA and Math (see below).

Table 1: 2014-2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment Results (7/27/15)

English Language Arts

All Students

53% Proficient

47% Not Proficient

AAs (22 students total)

38% Proficient

62% Not Proficient

White (28 students total)

79% Proficient

21% Not Proficient

Mathematics

All Students

29% Proficient

71% Not Proficient AAs (22 students total)

9% Proficient

91% Not Proficient

White (28 students total)

54% Proficient

46% Not Proficient

In looking at the F&P data from May 2015 (Table 2), we see that 40%, 75% and 60% of our African American Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade students, respectively, entered into the summer break having not yet met benchmark, or still approaching benchmark standards.

Table 2: F & P Results, End of the Year (May 2015)

Kindergarten

All Students- 39 Students

8% Not Yet Met Benchmark

15% Approaching Benchmark

41% Meets Benchmark

36% Exceeds Benchmark

Kindergarten

African American- 5 Students

20% Not Yet Met Benchmark

20% Approaching Benchmark

60% Meets Benchmark

0% Exceeds Benchmark

Kindergarten

White- 13 Students

8% Not Yet Met Benchmark

15% Approaching Benchmark

46% Meets Benchmark

31% Exceeds Benchmark

1st Grade

All Students- 39 Students Total

33% Not Yet Met Benchmark

15% Approaching Benchmark

21% Meets Benchmark

31% Exceeds Benchmark

1st Grade

African American- 12 Students

50% Not Yet Met Benchmark

25% Approaching Benchmark

8% Meets Benchmark

17% Exceeds Benchmark

1st Grade

White- 13 Students

8% Not Yet Met Benchmark

8% Approaching Benchmark

31% Meets Benchmark

54% Exceeds Benchmark

2nd Grade

All students-39 Students Total

28% Not Yet Met Benchmark

8% Approaching Benchmark

18% Meets Benchmark

46% Exceeds Benchmark

2nd Grade

African American- 10 Students

50% Not Yet Met Benchmark

10% Approaching Benchmark

30% Meets Benchmark

10% Exceeds Benchmark

2nd Grade

White- 10 Students

10% Not Yet Met Benchmark

0% Approaching Benchmark

10% Meets Benchmark

80% Exceeds Benchmark

In Table 3, data compares the same group of African American students to the same group of White students over the course of 2 years. From this data, it is evident that our African American students are already farther behind their White peers at the end of their Kindergarten year. Additionally, our African American students continue to fall farther behind in developing their reading skills in 1st grade, versus the White students, who are making gains from kindergarten to 1st grade.

Table 3: F & P Results Comparison 2014 vs. 2015

End of the Year Kindergarten 2013-2014 End of the Year

1st Grade 2014-2015

African American 30%

Not Yet Met Benchmark

20%

Approaching Benchmark

50%

Not Yet Met Benchmark

25%

Approaching Benchmark

White 20%

Not Yet Met Benchmark

0%

Approaching Benchmark 8%

Not Yet Met Benchmark

8%

Approaching Benchmark

We are not able to see the potential further widening of the achievement gap over grades 3, 4 and 5, due to the fact that we lack Reading Assessment data (F&P or SRI) , (i.e. these grades have not been administered Reading Assessments prior to this school year).

In regard to our Social/Emotional data, we currently have 30 Student Referrals to the office support for behavior, of which 77% (23 students) are for African American boys from 2nd and 3rd grade. All of the referrals fall under the category of “defiance”, “disruptive behavior” and/or “fighting”.

Finally, our school lacks engagement with African American families. The parents of our White students are most active in our SSC, PFC, and others forums for family involvement. For our African American children to improve, we must do a better job of engaging their parents and extended families because we know that parental engagement is critical to a child’s success in school

The Impact Grant will provide us with the necessary tools to support our school community and will help to address all of our needs above for our targeted students, so that we are not just another component in the system of failing our students of color. The message has been clear and agreed upon by many teachers and family members that we should not be allowed to have the title of a “Civil Rights Academy” if we are not adequately serving our traditionally underserved and marginalized families and children. We cannot imagine a situation that needs to be addressed with more thoughtfulness, urgency and importance than our current challenge with which we are faced.

Due to the lack of leadership, our teachers have not had any substantial professional development over the last approximately 8 years. To address this as immediately as possible, thus far, we have started work in the following areas:

Academic

Providing professional development for ELA Support:

- Purchased Reader’s Workshop and Writer’s Workshop Units of Study for each teacher

- Four 2-hour Professional Development sessions with a Reader's Workshop coach provided by the LEAD Team;
- One to two 60-minute sessions each month for revising ELA Spiral for our Reader's and Writer's Workshop;
- Six hours of training on Veteran's Day (whole staff volunteered for stipend) with a Teachers College-trained Facilitator;
- Multiple classroom observations at other sites (taking advantage of being a 9:30am start school and visiting classrooms that begin teaching Reader's Workshop at 8:00am);
- Hired a 0.5 FTE Reading Intervention Teacher to work with a prioritized group of African American Students. The position will be combined with a 0.5 FTE Resource Specialist Position to help ensure that students have appropriate interventions when at-risk and making sure there are not unnecessary referrals to SPED.

Providing Professional Development for Mathematics:

- Hired a 4th grade classroom teacher that transferred from the Central Office Mathematics Department and helped to write the new math curriculum;
- Partnering with Phil Daro (co-author of the Common Core Standards for Mathematics) and Teaching Partners to focus on professional math learning for teachers;
- Offering stipends to our teachers to provide monthly professional development (as well as 6 hours in August) for staff;
- Scheduling with Central Office Math Coach to provide model lessons to specific teachers on a regular basis;
- Monthly PD dedicated to the new math curriculum.

Social/Emotional

Employing our Central Office Restorative Practice/Response to Intervention Coach to implement School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) systems;

- Creating an Response to Intervention (RtI) Team, including our Central Office Coach, support staff, and a classroom teacher;
- Implementing and improving upon Tier I supports to improve classroom and school climate for all, decrease reactive management, increase active prevention, maximize academic achievement, and improve support for our at-risk students;
- Using a school-wide tickets of praise with rewards;
- Creating and teaching Common Area Behavior Agreements;

- Holding Care Team meetings 1-2 times per week with actionable outcomes.

School Community

Family & Community:

- Exploring the creation of an African American Advisory Committee to work in collaboration with our staff, SSC, ELAC and Parent Faculty Club.

Equity:

- Collaborating with the Office of Access & Equity to provide five two-hour whole staff professional development opportunities during our next five Early Release Days. These professional development sessions will focus on racial equity movement to help us explore the impact of race, implicit bias, and stereotype threat on academic achievement.
- Teaming with the San Francisco Coalition of Essential Small Schools to further our professional development around equity.

The Impact Grant will provide funding for the following proposed strategies and practices to further address the pressing needs of our school:

- To provide a four week summer school program that will be focused on Reading Intervention for a group of 15-20 African American boys, with 30-45 minutes of individual/small group instruction per day;
- Provide individual and small group Character/Social Emotional Skill Building utilizing the School Social Worker;
- Working explicitly to build trusting relationships with our African American families and community through events, parent participation and regular communication about progress on goals;
- Partnering with Urban Ed Academy (see below) to run the daily program with a focus on:

- Character Development
 - Health and Recreation
 - Cultural Awareness
 - Community Service
- What outcome(s) or change(s) do you believe this project or practice will have at your school site? Note: Quantitative and/or qualitative data are encouraged.

The low proficiency of African American students as well as the subsequent failure of the school to support these students and their families are historic problems at our school. One of the greatest challenges we face is to shift our thinking, as a school, and to move from a position of complacency to one of action. We are asking: How are we failing these students? What has been missing from their school experience? What do we need to do to remediate the situation? It will take time to implement and to assess the changes we have put in place. In the short-term, we will likely continue to fail our African American students, who need more support than we can currently give. As such, it is imperative that we supplement these efforts to improve proficiency in reading and mathematics with extracurricular resources beyond the school day and the school year. This impact grant will facilitate the start of such extracurricular activities.

Expanding the resources of our community beyond the school walls and outside of the academic calendar will further allow us the opportunity to accelerate the necessary social, emotional, and academic support for the students in greatest need. Our students will begin to experience more academic and social emotional success and be better prepared for the next grade level/school year. We understand and maintain that all students and members of our school community feel and are affected by this disparity, and therefore, all students will benefit from the success of their peers.

Supporting Research

- Students with 45 min session every 1.6 days progress about 1.5 grade levels, as compared to 0.5 grade levels before tutoring takes place. This study was for a year +, but even so, the proposed 4 week program is a start. Also, the students in the bottom 1 – 2 standard deviations below the mean of reading performance still progressed at a rate of 1.2 years per grade with daily tutoring (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12785624>)
- All young people experience learning losses when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer. Research spanning 100 years shows that students typically score lower on standardized tests at the end of summer vacation than they do on the same tests at the beginning of the summer (White, 1906; Heyns, 1978; Entwisle & Alexander 1992; Cooper, 1996; Downey et al, 2004; http://www.summerlearning.org/?page=know_the_facts).

- Most students lose about two months of grade level equivalency in mathematical computation skills over the summer months. Low-income students also lose more than two months in reading achievement, despite the fact that their middle-class peers make slight gains (Cooper, 1996).
- More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college (Alexander et al, 2007).
- Children lose more than academic knowledge over the summer. Most children—particularly children at high risk of obesity—gain weight more rapidly when they are out of school during summer break (Von Hippel et al, 2007).
- Parents consistently cite summer as the most difficult time to ensure that their children have productive things to do (Duffett et al, 2004;).

Urban Ed Academy Focus Areas:

- Character Development – is an element that will be implemented in all phases of our program. UEA is unique in that for every 10 participants we will have 1 dedicated adult to assist them. This will enable us to be more effective in instilling the necessary values and morals as we encourage them to be productive citizens. Our students will also be granted the opportunity to expand their horizons by exposing them to different geographically areas of their own city but also other field trip activities. This is extremely significant for children who would otherwise no have this opportunity to see outside their neighborhood.
- Health and Recreation – can be both an educational and fun opportunity for the child. Students spend a portion of each day participating in a wide array of recreational activities, but more importantly learn the health benefits of staying active. These same activities are used to attract and retain students throughout the entirety of our program but simultaneously help build teamwork skills, teach discipline, and conflict resolution.
- Cultural Awareness – is a unique focus for us. We make appoint to ensure that the staff reflect the demographic of the participants. We also expose children to the history of the different cultures that make up their communities—with an emphasis on African-American, Latino, and the Asian-Pacific Islander cultures. The traditions within each of these cultures are rich and in order for one to appreciate they must learn and participate in some of the traditions. UEA offers trips to local museums, provides ethnic recreational programs, and in addition we welcome the celebration and study of all ethnic holidays.

- Community Service – is a key focus area as well, the ultimate goal is for our boys to become productive young men. Students will not only learn how to access resources from their communities, but will also be stewards of their own service projects.
- As part of the application, you will provide a detailed action plan for how you plan to implement this within 12 months. In addition to this action plan, below please identify the key stakeholders, major milestones and any major risks you foresee?

Our key stakeholders are, first and foremost, our African American students and families. We are committed to accelerating the academic growth of each of our students, and we are prioritizing our African American boys, while, at the same time, working to build solid, lasting relationships with them and their families. Additionally, we will be working to strong partnership with the renown community based organization, Urban Ed Academy, a San Francisco-based organization committed to underserved youth and communities of color, focusing on academic as well as character development.

To implement this action plan our major milestones are as follows:

Major Milestones

February

- Identify group of 15-20 African American Students
- Organize and host a family information meeting and contract signing

May

- Summer School staff will lead an orientation for parents and students

June 6- July 1

- June 6- Program begins
- June 10, Student Growth Showcase
- June 17, Student Growth Showcase
- June 24, Student Growth Showcase
- July 1, Final Showcase

Major Risk Factors

- Student Attendance
- Possible need for transportation for some families
- Food needed for breakfast and lunch

Counter Strategies to the Major Risk Factors

- Rewards will be provided for good attendance
 - Alternative transportation options are being explored
 - Team with Student Nutrition to provide meals
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- Also, as part of your application, you'll send a detailed budget set-up form. Below can you tell us, how much is needed for implementation? (Ranges provided between \$0 and \$30,000)

\$15,000 - \$30,000