

APPLICATION: Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy

**Describe the critical challenge you would like to tackle in a different way.**

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 X 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.

While we know that the SBAC results for 2014 is a benchmark and cannot necessarily be compared with other schools throughout California or SFUSD, 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. So, when comparing the results of X School's African American students to the results of the overall student population and to the results of our white students, we can see that the African Americans are extremely less likely to be proficient in both ELA and Math (see below).

**2014-2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment Results (7/27/15)**

*English Language Arts*

<b>All Students</b>	<b>AAs (22 students total)</b>	<b>White (28 students total)</b>
53% Proficient	38% Proficient	79% Proficient
47% Not Proficient	62% Not Proficient	21% Not Proficient

*Mathematics*

All Students	AAAs (22 students total)	White (28 students total)
29% Proficient	9% Proficient	54% Proficient
71% Not Proficient	91% Not Proficient	46% Not Proficient

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

**F & P Results, End of the Year (May 2015)**

Kindergarten All Students- 39 Students 38% Not Yet Met Benchmark 15% Approaching Benchmark 41% Meets Benchmark 6% 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 38% Not Yet Met Benchmark 15% Approaching Benchmark 46% Meets Benchmark 31% Exceeds Benchmark
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade All Students- 39 Students Total 33% Not Yet Met Benchmark 15% Approaching Benchmark 21% Meets Benchmark 31% Exceeds Benchmark	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade African American- 12 Students 50% Not Yet Met Benchmark 25% Approaching Benchmark 3% Meets Benchmark 17% Exceeds Benchmark	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade White- 13 Students 38% 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 38% Approaching Benchmark 48% Meets Benchmark 16% 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 30% Exceeds Benchmark	

Additionally, as shown in the data table below titled, "**F & P Results Comparison 2014 vs. 2015**" comparing the same group of African American students to the same group of White students over the course of 2 years, it is evident that our African American students are already farther behind than their White peers and they continue to fall farther behind in developing their reading skills, versus the White students, who are making gains from kindergarten to 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

**F & P Results Comparison 2014 vs. 2015**

	End of the Year Kindergarten 2013-2014	End of the Year 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade 2014-2015
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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

Additionally, there is not any Reading Assessment data (F&P or SRI) for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade because these grades have not administered Reading Assessments previous to this school year.

In regards to our Social/Emotional data, we currently have 30 Student Referrals to the office support for behavior. 76% of the referrals are for African American students (all boys) with 100% of those referrals being from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. All of the referrals fall under the category of "defiance", "disruptive behavior" and/or "fighting".

Finally, the engagement of our families is heavily skewed towards to the parents of our White students. For our African American children to improve, our SSC, PFC, and other sources of family involvement must be more consistent with our student body. Parental engagement is critical to a child's success in school.

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. We need a thoughtful, team-created approach that will address all of our needs above for our targeted students, otherwise, we are just another component in the system of oppression for our students of color. The innovation Grant will provide us with the necessary tools to support our school community,

**What outcome(s) or change(s) would you like your design to achieve at your school site?**

The SFUSD Innovation Grant will allow us to close the opportunity gap for the African American students at X School. This will require a multipronged approach that addresses the teaching, learning and social needs at the site so that students do not continue to fall further behind. Working to catch African American students up to grade level and beyond requires specific academic support, as well as the engagement of families to further support student experience and achievement in the classroom. We plan to accomplish this via increased participation in our School Site Council and our Parent Club, as well as at our school functions (Parents and Partners as Advocates).

The activities and resources listed in the various parts of this application, however, will not be enough. We need to do something more. Utilizing time outside of regular school day –such as before school, after school, and summer –we will create *Innovative* programs that address the reading skills of our African American students, work with evidence-based techniques to build character, and, at the same time, rebuild relational trust with the families, who are most likely to have been marginalized by the very same institution to which we are asking them to send their

children. When we achieve this goal, not only will our African American student data reflect our academic progress within this specific population, but also we anticipate increased achievement for all students due to an improved school atmosphere that emphasizes shared success.

**How have you engaged your school to identify your critical challenge?**

We have shared the SBAC and F & P data with the current members of the SSC, which is currently made up of only staff members, as official parent members of the SSC all have either transferred out of the school or resigned from the position (we are currently in the process of recruiting, nominating and voting on a new SSC). We have also shared the data with the staff and to parents via the Principal's Chat. We will continue to openly share these data and invite conversation amongst the SCC and the school at large, taking into account that we must shift our biases where necessary.

The fact that we are a "Civil Rights Academy" attracts many teachers, staff and families that believe in teaching and realizing social justice. The community is showing great concern about the data around our underperforming subgroups and is desperate to help alleviate the matter. There is already an understanding amongst the community that equity does not mean treating everyone equally, and that we will be better as a community to eliminate the opportunity gap.

**What solutions have you tried or considered to address this challenge so far?**

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 X School. Nevertheless, the steps outlined above are the beginning of a coordinated attempt to remedy these issues. 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 listed above and 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. 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.

**How is this challenge an equity dilemma, one that is interfering with your school's ability to ensure that all of your students will thrive?**

As a district, SFUSD cannot become "**A Truly Equitable School District**" unless each and every school works specifically to meet the needs of our traditionally underserved families. As the new principal of the X School, and as a teaching and support staff that has been given very little support from leadership over the last many years, we are appalled that our data reflects the opposite of what it should mean to have "Civil Rights" on the front of our building. We cannot rely solely upon traditional approaches to this challenge. Our state of grace is gone, and has passed some time ago for the African American students at X School. Simply tagging "Civil Rights Academy" onto our title for the sake of diversity does not do anyone justice, but instead, quite possibly the opposite by reinforcing racial stereotypes.

This is not a just a problem for our African American students at X School. The data also shows that we are academically failing our Latino/Hispanic students. I would also maintain that all students and members of our school community feel and are

affected by this disparity. Our students have not been given the resources they have needed to thrive, and I will be the first to state that this is, in large part, due to lack of real leadership. Right now we are working to address critical needs in professional development and the school community.

We couldn't be in more agreement with Superintendent Carranza when he states, "I believe that meeting this challenge is what we have to do to make social justice a reality. That is what we mean when we say, 'equity'."

### Professional Development

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

#### Social Emotional

- Employing our Central Office Restorative Practice/Response to Intervention Coach to implement School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) systems, such as;
  - o The creation of an RtI Team, including our Central Office Coach, support staff, and a classroom teacher;
  - o 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;
  - o School-wide tickets of praise with rewards;

- o The creation of and explicit teaching of Common Area Behavior Agreements;
- o Care Team meetings 1-2 times per week with actionable outcomes.

#### Academic

- Professional Development for Reader's Workshop and Writer's Workshop/ELA

#### Supports

- o Purchased Reader's Workshop and Writer's Workshop Units of Study for each teacher
- o Four 2 hour Professional Development sessions with a Reader's Workshop coach provided by the LEAD Team.
- o 1-2 times per month for 45-60 minutes for revising ELA Spiral in regards to Reader's and Writer's Workshop.
- o 6 hours on Veteran's Day (whole staff volunteered for stipend) with a Teachers College-trained Facilitator
- o 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)
- o Currently in the process of hiring a .5FTE Reading Intervention Teacher to work with a prioritized group of African American Students. The position will be combined with a .5FTE Resource Specialist Position to help ensure that students have

appropriate interventions when at-risk and making sure there are not unnecessary referrals to SPED.

- Professional Development for Mathematics
  - o Hired a 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom teacher that transferred from the Central Office Mathematics Department and helped to write the new math curriculum;
  - o Offering Stipends to the above Teacher to provide monthly professional development (as well as 6 hours in August) for staff;
  - o Scheduling with Central Office Math Coach to provide model lessons to specific teachers on a regular basis;
  - o Monthly PD dedicated to the new math curriculum

#### School Community

- Family & Community
  - o Exploring the creation of an African American Advisory Committee to work in collaboration with our staff, SSC, ELAC and Parent Faculty Club.
- Equity
  - o Collaborating with the Office of Access & Equity to provide 5 two hour whole staff professional development opportunities during our next 5 Early Release Days that are focused on Racial Equity Movement to help us explore the impact of race, Implicit Bias and Stereotype Threat on academic achievement.
  - o Reaching out to team with San Francisco Coalition of Essential Small Schools to further our professional development around equity.

**Who is on your design team? (the more diverse the better)**

Student- African American 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade student

Principal

Student Advisor

RSP/Reading Intervention Teacher

Classroom Teacher

African American Parent

Para Professional

**How will you make sure your team will commit the time needed to succeed?**

Team members will be compensated for their time via any available Prop A funds. . Additionally, we will work to build leadership capacity within each member. This will build leadership within their roles on the team, investing them in their work, and feel valued by the team. We will work with the school's well-established Parent Faculty Club (PFC) to provide funding for celebrations within the team. The Design Team from X School is excited to embark upon this adventure, because we realize that our African American students and families deserve a thoughtful and integrated approach to improving their experience at X School. We will look to unique and innovative methods at the local, national and global level as models for our development of a strategy that will help actualize our goals via the iLab process