

QTEA Innovation Award Application - 2016

Application # 4

School Name: Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy

School Org Number: 505

Principal Name: Ron Machado

Principal Email: machador@sfusd.edu

Person submitting grant: Ron Machado

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Describe the equity challenge or opportunity you would like to tackle in a different way.

Our challenge at Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy (HMCRA) is that we are continuing to underserve our African American and Latino students and families. Even with efforts put forth throughout the last school year, we continue to be a operating part of a system that marginalizes the traditionally marginalized families and children of our society. We are failing our children, and not just our students of color. We are failing all of our students because we are reinforcers of implicit biases and stereotype threat, thus, not adequately providing experiences for ALL children that will equip our future leaders to better create a just and peaceful society. Many of our African American and Latino students are not feeling successful in school, as indicated on just a few points of data as shown below.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Results (7/22/16)

Results from the 2015-2016 Smarter Balanced Assessments in English Language Arts, 67% of our 3rd-5th grade African American students and 81% of our Latino students were Not Proficient. On the Mathematics SBAC, 85% of our African American students and 96% of our Latino students were Not Proficient. For the same year, 29% of our African American students and 18% of our Latino students were chronically absent.

In looking at the F&P data from May 2016, we see that about 50% of our Kindergarten through 5th grade African American students entered into the summer break having Not Yet Met Benchmark, with 0 students African American Approaching Benchmark. About 36% of our Latino Students are also Not Yet Meeting Benchmark. This is proving to be a trend in our school that is worsening, with more of our African American and Latino students falling below the benchmark from trimester to Trimester and year to year.

In regards to our Social/Emotional data, we currently have 12 Student Referrals to the office support for behavior. 10 (83%) of the referrals are for African American students

(all boys) with 100% of those referrals being from 2nd and 3rd grade. All of the referrals fall under the category of “defiance”, “disruptive behavior” and/or “fighting”.

Finally, the engagement of our families is still heavily skewed towards to the parents of our White students. Even with efforts to outreach last year. For our African American and Latino 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 remains clear and agreed upon by the teachers and many of the family members at HMCRA, and this is 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 HMCRA. 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 is this challenge or opportunity an equity dilemma, one that affects 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 Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy, 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 Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy. 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 Harvey Milk. 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, HMCRA teachers have not had any substantial professional development over the last approximately 8 years, with exception to last year. To address this as immediately as possible, we are continuing our work from last year in the following areas:

Social Emotional

- 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 and posting 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 8 days of 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 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 Utilizing a .5FTE Reading Intervention Teacher to work with a prioritized group of African American Students. The position is 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 Changing all 3 4th and 5th grade classes to 4th/5th grade blended classes to help ensure collaboration and team growth.
 - 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 Comprehensive Approach to Literacy

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 Student Support Services to provide 3 two hour whole staff professional development opportunities during our next 3 Early Release Days that are focused on Restorative Practices.
 - o Reaching out to team with San Francisco Coalition of Essential Small Schools to further our professional development around equity.

What solutions have you tried or considered to address this challenge or seize this opportunity 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 Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy. 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 have you engaged your school to identify your challenge/opportunity for this process?

We have shared the SBAC and F & P data with the current members of the SSC and with the staff. We will share with 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 continues to show great concern about the data around our underperforming subgroups and is desperate to help alleviate the matter. There is 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.

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

Principal- Ron Machado

Student Advisor- Glenn Castro

Resource Specialist Teacher- Lorenzo Buchanan

Classroom Teacher- John Muratet
Secretary- Antonae Robertson
Para Professional- Teshia Jenkins

How will you make sure your team will commit the time and effort 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 Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy 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 Harvey Milk. 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.

Which Innovation bootcamp did your school participate in?

In process of scheduling with Chris Armentrout Soon