

QTEA Innovation Award Application - 2016

Application # 2

School Name: Mission High

School Org Number: 725

Principal Name: Guthertz

Principal Email: guthertze@sfusd.edu

Person submitting grant: Guthertz

Submitter's Email: guthertze@sfusd.edu

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

Our entire district faces a crisis when it comes to getting all of our African American students graduating college and career ready. Of all demographics in our district, this group has the lowest overall achievement in Math and English Language Arts. Research and examples of programs focusing on African American male achievement and manhood development have been demonstrating how strategic, culturally relevant coursework specifically designed for African American males have been successful in increasing the graduation and college-going rate of this demographic subgroup. At Mission High School, we have had a successful track record of increasing the number of African American students graduating college and career ready from year to year. We have begun implementation of an African American Manhood course and have prioritized supports for all African American students through workshops, strong community and parent outreach and development of a strong Black Student Union. Despite all this, we feel we can improve our impact on our African American female student population even more if we specifically address the challenges and struggles that this unique group of students face. We would like to utilize the design thinking methodology, and specifically the user-centered design approach, to develop new and creative solutions that have even greater impact than what we've achieved.

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

- Identification of effective strategies to build a strong sense of purpose and healthy sense of self, specifically for African American female students.
- Understand the unique challenges and needs our African American female students have by involving and listening to their voice and those of their families.
- Increase the numbers of our African American female student population who graduate college eligible, ready to attend college, matriculate and graduate from college
- Increasing the number of African American female students who attain all the

graduate profile knowledge, skills, dispositions and behaviors, especially having a stronger and healthier view of their own selves.

- Decrease the number of teen age pregnancies.
- Increase the number of African American female students who are able to foster and maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Cultivate a culture of excellence among African American female students.

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?

The three “dispositions and behaviors” outlined in our Vision 2025 Graduate Profile are the key “target areas” this initiative will address. We find that our African American girls, in particular, face challenges involving sense of self, identity, and growth mindset. We also believe that, while we have seen some positive growth in most areas for female African-American students there are still huge gaps in terms of academic achievement as measured by GPA and SBAC, and and social-emotional gaps as measured by the SEL/Climate surveys. That said, supporting our female African-American students is a key factor in our work to support equity and what we call at MHS, Anti-Racist Teaching.

In addition, in reviewing the “10 Big Shifts” outlined in Vision 20205, we will be contributing to our district's desire to be an innovative system by utilizing design thinking methodology to develop solutions. In addition, increasing our target population's “cultural competence” is a key goal of our initiative.

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

We have offered and run wellness and support groups for our female African-American students, we have a strong BSU, we have spent years and years with our collective community focused on Anti-Racist Teaching, and we have created goals and measures designed specifically to monitor and support this groups' ongoing achievement and success. Still we deeply believe that there is more to do and more focused work to do, especially in this area!

How have you engaged your school to identify your challenge/opportunity for this process?

The entire school is trained in and collectively supports the school's vision to put front and center Anti-Racist Teaching as its core value. Our UBC has been a very, very strong partner in this work over many years. This year, for example, we have rolled out the AA Male Identity class which serves as an A-G course over 75 AA male students.

This course was identified, supported, and approved by our entire instructional leadership team which includes our UBC representative.

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

Although we have not recruited our design team members yet, our principal, Eric Guthertz, has made a commitment to serve on this team. In addition, our African American Achievement and Leadership Initiative, Post-Secondary Program Manager, Linda Martley-Jordan, will serve as design team lead and project manager for the duration of the year. We also anticipate recruiting one African American parent, one African American female student, a representative from a community based organization supporting our African American students and two staff members (at least one teacher) to be on our design team.

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

First, our principal and project lead have already calendared the design session dates outlines in the “expectations and timeline” document to ensure availability for each session. We will also carefully recruit other team members who are able to commit, up front, to those dates. We also realize that there may be additional time requirements between sessions needed.

Which Innovation bootcamp did your school participate in?

August 22, 2016, 4:30pm-7:30pm