

## QTEA Innovation Award Application - 2016

### Application # 5

**School Name:** The Academy - SF @ McAteer

**School Org Number:** 832

**Principal Name:** Greg Markwith

**Principal Email:** markwithg@sfusd.edu

**Person submitting grant:**

**Submitter's Email:**

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

During the 2nd week of October, The Academy - SF @ McAteer will move into its 1st ever dedicated space, after sharing a campus with Ruth Asawa School of the Arts for its first 11 years in existence. From when The Academy opened in 2005 until now, space on campus has not always been distributed equitably and students and staff have often felt “less than” due to lack of space consideration.

Thankfully, due to the modernization of the McAteer campus, for the first time ever The Academy will take ownership of a space dedicated to its students' needs. This, coupled with the intensive mission and visioning work done of the last several years that has led to its clearest identity yet, we have an opportunity to provide our stakeholders with the most welcoming space ever. We believe that taking ownership of this space will create the most fertile conditions in our history for our students to once and for all feel like they have everything they need to feel like an equal partner on campus.

Specifically, we want to re-imagine what it feels and looks like to enter into the main doors of our school and main office and think about what needs to be true for all stakeholders to feel like honored and cherished members of our community. What does our main office need to look and feel like so when stakeholders enter it, they feel like their needs are being met and they are the most important people in the building.

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

If achieved our design would make our stakeholders (and especially our students) feel like for the first time they have a space dedicated and curated solely for the express purpose of ensuring their academic and social-emotional success. Stakeholders would feel like their cultures, demographic, gender, sexuality and socio-economic status is honored and depicted in the space. In addition to students feeling disenfranchised on

campus, our staff also feel that as well. This more welcoming, engaging and reflective space will provide them with the conditions to serve our students as best as possible.

### **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 mentioned above our stakeholders - and especially our students - have always struggled with feeling like the "other" on campus compared to SOTA. Creating an entrance to our school and main office that indicates in many different and creative ways that they are at The Academy - SF and will add to the history of The Academy being an inclusive and responsive community space. With the modernization work being done on the building, which includes dedicated space for the Academy, it is important that we seize the opportunity to maximize the impact a new space can have on the academic and social-emotional learning at the site.

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

Over the last several years, since The Academy became its own school with its own Principal we have done the following to clarify and strengthen its identity in advance of moving into its new space:

- With input from ALL stakeholders, created a clear mission, vision and identity encompassed in a document titled "The Academy SF School Framework"
- Created our own independent bell school which serves the needs of our students and teachers much better than the one we shared with SOTA
- Worked to create our own floor and space through the bond project on campus
- Worked with High School Lead to draft a board resolution to change our name from "Academy of Arts and Sciences" to "The Academy - SF @ McAteer" in order to solidify and take ownership of our identity.
- Worked with Pupil Services to implement an expansive and inclusive PBIS program at our site in support of improving the climate and culture of our site and increase the attention on social-emotional learning.
- Strategically created teacher and staff teams to increase connection and collaboration between adults on campus in support of engaging our students in the classroom and

model effective teaming and community for our students.

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

The single most significant factor in the positive reform and advancement of The Academy - SF has been the development of an identity and procurement, development and ownership of space. This has been a topic of conversation across stakeholder groups since the school began in 2005 and support for the creation and development of an identity has been discussed at SSC meetings, regular parent organizations, UBC and staff meetings and student government meetings. Moreover, one of the factors that has galvanized our community and spurred our stakeholders confidence in the overall direction of our school has been the arrangement of space to promote collaboration amongst staff and to build community across stakeholder groups. Several years ago, the administration at The Academy worked to create an Academy hallway of classrooms so the staff was not so disparate across the campus. Additionally, students would feel like they had their own space at that it was designed just for them. Now that we are on the verge of having our own floor, the faculty and support staff is already brainstorming ways to create conditions in our new space to ensure students once and for all like they have a place that is representative of just The Academy.

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

Greg Markwith, Principal

Karen Bioski - Simon, Assistant Principal

Benjamin Coleman - Levy, Math Teacher

Liz DeGele, Instructional Reform Facilitator

Brendan McCarthy, Athletic Director and Attendance Ambassador

Lorraine Flores, Paraprofessional

Jennifer Duru, 10th grade student

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

We began talking about the innovation award idea at the end of the summer and received solid commitments from the above team members. We will keep a separate google calendar with the dates and events, as well as send our reminders to team members.

### **Which Innovation bootcamp did your school participate in?**

August 11, 2016, 4:30pm-7:30pm