

Lancaster School District 2022–23 Community Schools Implementation Plan (Attachment II)

Lancaster School District is seeking funding for 22 schools via the California Community Schools Partnership Program. Each school has a detailed plan for their community schools work aligned with the broader community schools vision of the district and community.

Sierra Elementary School (Principal: Rebekah McConnell)

Sierra Elementary is seeking funding to invest in our plan to build a whole-child focused community school. We recognize that the key components of a community school include integrated student supports, family and community engagement, collaborative leadership practices, and extended learning time and opportunities. We have designed our implementation to focus on **integrated student supports** in Year 1, and will continue to build and develop across the comprehensive school model over the course of the 5-year grant.

School Overview, Needs and Assets:

We serve a beautifully diverse community, including significant populations of students who have been historically underserved:

- 26% African-American, 56% Hispanic, 0% Native American
- 90% eligible for free or reduced lunch
- 16% English learners
- 12% students with IEPs
- 3% foster youth

Summary of Assets Overview: We have invested significantly in our school model to support these student populations. For example, we have the following systems of support in place:

- Foundational MTSS systems where students are identified, a multi-skilled team collaborates to support, and tiered interventions are implemented
- Full inclusion in UTK and Kindergarten to ensure that all students are benefitting from our MTSS systems, while ensuring that students with special needs are in the least restrictive environment
- Full-time counselor and social worker to support students experiencing challenging personal and academic situations
- Trauma-informed practices training for all staff members
- Designated SEL time and resources built into the school day
- Foundational Advisory program that meets 1 time a week and is designed to develop relationships, foster community, and support students and families
- Weekly Social-Emotional Learning team meetings to ensure that students receive necessary supports at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels

Summary of Needs Assessment: However, we continue to have significant needs that we must address holistically:

- Significant increase in students who have experienced trauma/ACES since 2019
- Social-emotional learning and strength continues to be a challenge for our students, especially coming out of the pandemic (e.g., behavior referrals have increased significantly from the 2021-2022 to the 2022-2023 school year)
- Student YouthTruth results demonstrate significant needs in student emotional wellbeing
 - Only 50% of students say that they feel like they belong at school
 - Only 64% of students say they have an adult from school that they can talk to
 - Only 22% of students say that they feel that students behave well in their class
- Student SEL and mental health screener results demonstrate significant needs in student emotional wellbeing
 - 44% of lower grade students are below average or well below average in the domain of social perspective taking
 - 33% of lower grade students are below average or well below average in the domain of social problem solving
 - 39% of lower grade students are below average or well below average in the domain of self-control
 - 45% of upper grade students are below average or well below average in the domain of understanding others
 - 34% of upper grade students are below average or well below average in the domain of social problem solving
 - 44% of upper grade students are below average or well below average in the domain of self-control
- 47.26% of Sierra students are chronically absent students. Students who are chronically absent display significant needs in social-emotional and behavioral learning, as well as struggle with academics. Our chronically absent students also struggle to develop a sense of belonging and to create meaningful relationships with adults and peers on campus.

Core Commitments: Describe the school's commitment to implement core principles, including the Cornerstone Commitments identified in the Framework. Describe the developmental phase for exploration, emerging, evolving, and excelling the core commitments.

As a leadership team, we are deeply committed to the Cornerstone Commitments identified in the CCSPP Framework. We would categorize our commitments and structures in support of these commitments as **evolving**; that said, our emergence out of the pandemic has tested many of our baseline practices in a way that requires new thinking and approaches.

- ***Assets-Driven and Strength-Based Practice:*** We recognize that our community has significant strengths alongside needs. For example, students and families demonstrate incredible resilience in the face of challenges. We seek to extend that

strength to the academic environment. We provide Foundational MTSS systems where students are identified, a multi-skilled team collaborates to support, and tiered interventions are implemented.

- ***Racially Just and Restorative School Climates:*** We have invested in a positive behavioral interventions and support system over several years, including daily SEL instruction to support students in conflict, discipline and community. We have invested in a positive behavioral interventions and support system over several years, including restorative practices to support students in conflict, discipline and community.
- ***Powerful, Culturally Proficient and Relevant Instruction:*** We have made a concerted effort to recruit and hire staff members that reflect the demographic profile of our students; for example, 41% of teachers identify as persons of color. All staff members engage in consistent professional development to ensure instructional practices support our scholars in culturally relevant and responsive practices, particularly in support of English learners. Our teachers have culturally relevant classroom libraries.
- ***Shared Decision Making and Participatory Practices:*** Our school has a committed Instructional Leadership Team that includes teachers and other core staff members; all significant data and decisions related to instruction are vetted through this team. Further, we have recruited highly engaged parents to lead our School Site Council. Parents are regularly invited to participate in school events, communities and forums.

Measurable Goals and Activities: Identify the school's goals and activities, and describe how progress towards goals will be measured (i.e., SMART goals).

Using these grant funds, our school will invest in the following over the course of our five-year plan:

- Full-time social worker / counselor to support the significant emotional needs of our student community.
- Access to additional medical, dental and emotional support on campus
- Assistance for providing safe routes to and from school
- Ongoing professional development and training to ensure all staff members are aligned and committed to the core aspects of our community school practices (includes internal and external training opportunities).
- A comprehensive social-emotional growth system (Sown To Grow), where students can share their emotional wellbeing and experience at school and also build critical SEL skills over time.

We have established clear, measurable goals in support of our plan:

- 100% of teachers will be trained on the core aspects of our community school practices and how new roles/partnerships will expand whole-child supports.
- 100% of students will have access to high quality Tier I emotional wellbeing support on a weekly basis. We will begin with a weekly emotional check-in, and expand into academic check-ins and social-emotional skill-building. We will adjust

the master schedule to include at least 20 minutes of SEL-focused learning time each week.

- 100% of students will have access to high quality Tier II and Tier II interventions based on their determined needs. We will expand our MTSS system to include emotional wellbeing inputs, and we will demonstrate a response to those inputs in a timely manner. Families will be a collaborative partner in this process.
- Students will improve their social-emotional learning capacity, as measured by pre/posts on an annual SEL screener. By 5th grade, 80%+ of students will show improvement or high levels of capacity in Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Responsible Decision Making, and Relationship Skills.
- Students will experience a stronger sense of belonging, as measured by pre/posts on an annual SEL screener. By 5th grade, 80%+ of students will show improvement or high levels of capacity in Sense of Belonging measures.

Key Staff: Explain the plan for establishing and/or maintaining a Community School Director/Coordinator (Leader) to work with steering committees/advisory councils, key staff and partners within the school to execute the Implementation Plan.

The following roles are designated as leaders of the community school approach at our school:

- Community Schools Implementation Leader = Site Principal
- Leadership Team = Site Principal, Assistant Principal, Instructional Coach, Teacher representatives from various grades/departments, Family Ambassador
- Planned Implementation Structures
 - Weekly implementation meeting of key roles and leadership team
 - Monthly progress updates to Instructional Leadership Team
 - Quarterly progress updates to all staff

LCAP Connections: Our community school goals are fully aligned with our district's LCAP, specifically under the following objectives and goals:

LCAP Goal 2 Equitable Learning Practices and Positive Learning Environments – We will provide the necessary resources and supports to create and maintain positive learning environments to eliminate barriers to success for all students.

- 2.1 Counselors will provide small group and individual support targeted towards foster students to ensure their social/emotional and behavioral needs are addressed through social-emotional programs (such as but not limited to Second Step) based on their needs.
- 2.3 The Department of Equity, Access, and Student Outcomes will provide a tiered system of support for academics, social/emotional, and behavior through the implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support that targets low-income students' need for individualized, small group, and personalized, equitable learning environments.

LCAP Goal 3 Safe and Supportive Environments – We will provide safe, secure, equitable and operationally efficient environments at all facilities for students, staff, and community members

- 3.4 The district will provide additional certificated, and administrative support, to ensure and increase safety at all schools and facilities with increased monitoring as we implement various campus safety programs and equitable environments for our low-income student group.
- 3.5 School sites will provide alternative schools/programs to offer placement for low-income and foster students as an alternative to suspension and expulsion, while increasing low-income student access to mental health services, and social-emotional learning.

LCAP Goal 4-Family and Community Engagement – We will build positive partnerships with families and the community by increasing participation and active involvement on campuses and at site and district events.

- 4.1 School sites and the district will implement programs and supports for families to increase their engagement, and sites will be offered specific feedback on their increased capacity towards family engagement throughout the school year.
- 4.3 The district will assist sites in implementing parent support and training programs and opportunities for both virtual and face-to-face environments that increase parent capacity to assist students in academic achievement and the social development of low-income students. Subsequently, staff will also be trained in a dual capacity framework in order to provide for expectations at the site level for families.
- 4.5 The district will provide each school with a family ambassador who will serve as a liaison between the school and low-income families, provide resources for parents, recruit volunteers, and both coordinate and assist in the communication of parent workshops.