

A. Overall Project and Vision

Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District (KECSD) is structured as a community-aligned school system as opposed to a more traditional neighborhood school system. All students move through the grade levels as one unit. This allows each grade level to provide the most effective education program because of the unity formed with each stakeholder in the district and community. KECSD has long embodied the principles and practices of the California Community Schools Framework by championing the "whole child" approach that features "an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement."¹ This commitment is reflected by the KECSD Mission Statement: "To continually strive to inspire students to learn and grow beyond their potential by (1) fostering a collegial or team atmosphere between home, community, and school for the benefit of each student; (2) imparting a quality education combined with a positive learning experience; (3) providing instruction that meets the individual needs of each student; (4) developing the learning and social skills necessary for lifelong learning; and (5) presenting an open-door policy allowing all people concerned with the well-being of each student to communicate their ideas for improving the district.

As a recipient of a CCSPP Planning Grant, KECSD has spent the last year engaging with a variety of community and school stakeholders to develop project goals and activities. With the support of an external evaluator, KECSD conducted district- and site-level needs assessments, asset mappings, and gap analyses to inform the project design. This included the development of multiple mechanisms to elicit input (e.g., listening sessions, focus groups, surveys, interviews) on the community schools project from students, parents, faculty and staff, community members, and community partners. These efforts resulted in the development of the following four CCSPP Project goals that are aligned with the KECSD LCAP, each community school's mission and vision, and all four pillars of the California Community Schools Framework: (1) Build district and school capacity for early identification of student academic and behavioral needs and enhance delivery of mental health services within KECSD's existing Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) infrastructure. (2) Expand family engagement and educational programming in order to connect KECSD families to community resources, empower parents to fully engage in their children's education, and foster healthy home learning environments. (3) Develop community partnerships and build the capacity of faculty, staff, and administrators to implement community schools with fidelity. (4) Enhance after school, intersession, and summer learning programs to include new enrichment, socio-emotional growth, and youth development opportunities.

B. Description of participating schools and demonstrated need

Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District has six proposed community schools sites: Washington Elementary (TK/K), Roosevelt Elementary (Grade 1), Lincoln

¹ Coalition for Community Schools: Community Schools Fact Sheet. https://www.communityschools.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/05/CS_fact_sheet_final.pdf.

Elementary (Grades 2/3), Reagan Elementary (Grades 4-6), Rafer Johnson Jr. High (Grades 7/8) and Central Valley Home School (K-8 independent study). KECSD students, families, and community members face multiple challenges common to rural Central Valley communities that directly impact students' academic achievement and social-emotional growth, including high poverty, homelessness, low levels of adult educational attainment, and limited access to health, educational, and youth programs and services. KECSD serves 2,189 students, of which 70.5% are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged, 12% are English Learners, 10% are students with disabilities, 4% are homeless, and 0.6% are Foster Youth. Many students do not come from familial backgrounds with the capacity to provide strong academic or social-emotional support at home. Only 26.7% of adult community members over the age of 25 have obtained a bachelor's degree and 16.5% have not completed high school. Further, since all KECSD schools are centrally located in the city of Kingsburg, many socioeconomically disadvantaged families that live in the more rural parts of the KECSD service area have difficulty accessing extended learning programs and community resources.

KECSD's community schools needs assessment and asset mapping/gap analysis identified several specific needs to be addressed by the proposed CCSPP Implementation Project, many of which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many Kingsburg families continue to face challenges such as loss of wages, social isolation, housing and food insecurities, lack of childcare, declines in physical health, and increased levels of mental and behavioral health disturbance. Input from parents, staff, and community stakeholders coupled with data on student office referrals, CPS cases, CPS student removals from home, and serious threat assessments resulting in police intervention, reveal the need for more targeted mental health interventions and family support. The 2022-23 KECSD LCAP includes a specific action (2.4) for improving mental health services, which cites high levels of stress experienced by English Learners, foster and homeless youth, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students as adversely affecting students' physical, emotional, and psychological health, which ultimately impacts their learning. When comparing overall 2019 to 2022 CAASPP scores, KECSD students' math scores dropped from 15.7 points below standard to 37.1 points below standard and ELA scores dropped from 12.2 points above standard to 1.7 points below standard. As detailed in the table below, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly widened the learning gap for KECSD students that are homeless, English Learners (EL), and students with disabilities (SWD).

Table 1. Comparison of CAASPP Math and ELA Test Scores (2019 vs 2022)				
	ELA 2022	ELA 2019	Math 2022	Math 2019
All students	1.7 pts below	12.2 pts above	37.1 pts below	15.7 pts below
Homeless	22 pts below	20.7 pts below	70.4 pts below	49.8 pts below
ELs	57.2 pts below	29.7 pts below	84.9 pts below	56.2 pts below
SWD	90.8 pts below	85.7 pts below	109.2 pts below	124 pts below

C. Learning opportunities, supports, and services to be provided

To prepare for the proposed CCSPP Project, KECSD established a CCSPP Leadership Team at the district level to present information about the California Community Schools Framework to school site-level leaders and stakeholder groups. Community Schools Advisory Councils were established at each community school site, and feature a roster of key school leaders, parents, and community members. The Leadership Team worked with each Advisory Council to gather school-site information and resources to conduct a needs assessment, asset mapping, and gap analysis to inform the overall CCSPP Project goals and site-level implementation plans. Through these collaborative planning efforts, KECSD and its community school leaders established four CCSPP goals as well as key activities, responsible personnel, budgeted expenditures, and evaluation mechanisms related to each goal.

Goal 1: Build district and school capacity for early identification of student academic and behavioral needs and enhance delivery of mental health services within KECSD's existing Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) infrastructure.
Community Schools Pillar 1: Integrated student supports

KECSD has implemented a robust MTSS system, which includes Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) frameworks to identify and address students' needs. However, the district's ability to provide all students with appropriate tiered interventions has been impacted by significant recent increases in student office referrals and demand for mental health services. CCSPP funding will allow KECSD to improve access to mental health care at each school site by hiring additional mental health professionals and training faculty and staff in early detection and response to mental illness. Current mental health staff shared across KECSD's six school sites includes one full-time School Psychologist, one part-time and two full-time School Counselors, five paraprofessional Behavioral Support Assistants, and two part-time Psychologist Interns. KECSD will hire two additional counselors and increase a current part-time position to full-time to ensure each school site has a dedicated counselor to (1) support school staff and parents regarding the behavioral, social, and emotional needs of students; (2) provide counseling to students; and (3) support teachers and staff in implementing restorative practices and trauma-informed care. The district will also hire a Behavioral Interventionist (BCBA) to provide a range of psychological and behavioral services to students and families, including (1) screening and assessment; (2) individual and group counseling; (3) crises management and intervention with students and their families; (4) connecting students and their family members to available support services; and (5) engaging with teachers and staff during professional learning in such areas as the effective implementation of restorative practices, trauma-informed care, and culturally responsive instruction in order to build local capacity to meet the social, psychological, and educational needs of KECSD students. Together, these new PPS-credentialed student support personnel will significantly improve each school's ability to identify early warning signs and provide interventions needed to promote students' academic, social-emotional, and positive youth development.

Goal 2: Expand family engagement and educational programming in order to connect KECSD families to community resources, empower parents to fully engage in their children’s education, and foster healthy home learning environments. *Community Schools Pillar 2: Family and community engagement*

Kingsburg Elementary Charter will use CCSPP funding to develop tools, policies and procedures, and digital and print materials to establish a Family Resource Center (FRC). The FRC will be overseen by the Community Schools Director with support from a Family Engagement Assistant. The FRC will support community schools efforts in building parents’ capacity to foster social and emotional learning supports in the home and to actively connect families with available community services. As the FRC is fully implemented, it will coordinate and deliver several parent outreach efforts and adult education programs across all six KECSD community schools. The FRC will lead district efforts to implement the Parenting Partners capacity-building program, which includes six bilingual, evidence-based workshops, along with materials to empower parents with practical tools to navigate the multiple key roles which support student achievement and school improvement. In addition, the FRC will collaborate with regional adult education providers to ensure adult community members have access to job training, GED classes, citizenship classes, and ESL classes. The FRC will also serve as a key resource for non-English speaking members of the Kingsburg community for translation services and assistance with negotiating cultural and language barriers when accessing social services and community resources.

In addition to developing a Family Resource Center, KECSD will hire four new Family Liaisons to meet the needs of students and families who are considered to be at-risk, socioeconomically disadvantaged, and/or are homeless and protected under McKinney-Vento. Family Liaisons will work directly with school Principals, student support staff, and the Community Schools Director to improve school attendance, academic performance, tardiness and general health and well-being of students; refer students and families to local agencies or school services as appropriate; facilitate communication between families and school site staff; and monitor student and family progress in accessing support services. Due to the rural nature of KECSD communities, many families lack transportation to attend school activities and access services, especially after school and during summer months. The Family Liaison will assist with the coordination of transportation, including using district vehicles to transport students and parents.

Goal 3: Develop community partnerships and build the capacity of faculty, staff, and administrators to implement community schools with fidelity. *Community Schools Pillar 3: Collaborative leadership and practices for educators and administrators*

The community of Kingsburg has a long history of supporting and engaging with Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District. The city government and the school district have cooperated to co-develop city parks in conjunction with school playgrounds, co-sponsor after school programs, and participate on each other's planning teams. The CCSPP-funded Community Schools Director will collaborate with each school site’s Community Schools Advisory Team to provide technical and

programmatic assistance to support principals, faculty, staff, and community partners in securing resources and creating opportunities that benefit students, families, and the community. The Community Schools Director will manage partnerships and communications across all community school sites; leverage all available school and community services; and participate in community meetings to build relationships and collaboration with new community organizations. The Community Schools Director will also organize professional development opportunities to build collaborative leadership skills, community engagement mechanisms, and understanding of community schools practices and principles. This will include training offered in conjunction with the county technical service provider; professional development in the areas of restorative practices, trauma-informed care, and culturally responsive instruction; and participation in regional and national professional development events, such as the National Community Schools Conference.

KECSD has already received commitments from several community partners to engage in the planning and implementation of the CCSPP Project, including Kingsburg Community Assistance Programs (KCAPS), the Kingsburg City Government, and the Kingsburg Police Department. The Community Schools Director will work with (1) KCAPS to leverage existing community services (e.g., food bank, assistance with clothing and housing) and expand after school tutoring services; (2) the Kingsburg City Government to continue supporting extended learning opportunities; and (3) the Kingsburg Police Department to coordinate cost-sharing and training of a School Resource Officer (SRO). The SRO will serve as a resource for students, parents, teachers, and administration regarding school safety, positive youth development, and improving perceptions and relations between students, staff, and law enforcement officials.

Goal 4: Enhance after school, intersession, and summer learning programs to include new enrichment, socio-emotional growth, and youth development opportunities. *Community Schools Pillar 4: Extended learning time and opportunities*

While KECSD provides several extended learning opportunities, the community schools needs assessment, asset mapping, and gap analysis identified the need to increase out-of-school-time academic support and enrichment opportunities given the significant levels of pandemic-related learning loss demonstrated by KECSD's student population. Current extended learning opportunities include (1) an After-School Enrichment Program five days per week throughout the school year; (2) an EL Summer School Program designed to support the linguistic, cultural, and academic needs of students who are learning English as a second language; and (3) a variety of enrichment activities offered in conjunction with the regular school day through the AVID, GATE, CTE, athletics, and arts programs. CCSPP funding will be braided with other funding streams (e.g., LCAP, ELO-P) to enhance KECSD's year-round extended learning academic and enrichment offerings. Over the first years of the Community Schools Project, after school and summer learning opportunities will specifically address student learning loss and social-emotional needs resulting from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure all students are meeting grade-level standards in all subject areas. Extended learning will prioritize students with special needs, students performing below standard, homeless students, English Learners, and those with

difficult home situations. The CCSPP grant will cover costs associated with KECSO certified personnel efforts above and beyond standard contract duties to deliver extended learning opportunities to all students requiring targeted academic, behavioral, and/or social-emotional supports. This includes staffing costs associated with delivering new summer academic and enrichment programming, allowing KECSO community schools to operate year-round programs for students requiring more intensive extended-year academic and behavioral supports. KECSO will also procure new extended learning program materials and supplies for use during student enrichment activities and pro-social learning opportunities, including anti-vaping, anti-bullying, and cyber safety programming; community service-learning projects; and youth leadership development activities.

D. Engagement with community stakeholders and cooperating agencies

Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District has formalized a district-level CCSPP Leadership Team and site-level Advisory Councils to guide districtwide community schools planning and stakeholder engagement. The Leadership Team includes the Community Schools Director, district leadership, Student Services Department staff, and representatives from select cooperating agencies. CCSPP Advisory Councils include parents, site administrators, teachers, student support staff (e.g., school counselors, behavioral assistants). As detailed in Section E, the Leadership Team and site-level Advisory Councils will meet quarterly to collaboratively review school and community needs assessment data, plan and refine services delivery, and engage in continuous quality improvement. This meaningful stakeholder engagement and collaboration within and between the school and district will ensure shared governance and shared responsibilities for the process of school transformation.

The Community Schools Director will continue to engage a wide variety of community schools stakeholders in the community schools shared decision making process through mechanisms developed through the CCSPP Planning Grant Project. These activities will include parent, staff, and community member surveys; listening tours at each school site; focus groups; key informant interviews; and presentations at various district and school-site meetings to update stakeholders on community schools progress and outcomes. The Community Schools Director will also manage existing community schools partnerships, develop new relationships with additional agencies as directed by the Leadership Team, and leverage all available community schools resources to benefit students, families, and community members. The following list includes key existing agencies that have committed to supporting KECSO's CCSPP Implementation Project and/or providing students and their families with wraparound services and extended learning opportunities.

- **Kingsburg Community Assistance Program and Services (KCAPS)** provides Kingsburg families with food, clothing, utility, and housing assistance as well as job training and adult education. KECSO is currently working with KCAPS to strategically expand its services, including partnering with the district to establish an after school tutoring program.

- **Kingsburg City Government** will continue to oversee co-developed city parks that also serve as school playgrounds, co-sponsor after school programs, and provide representatives to serve on KECSD planning committees, including the CCSPP Leadership Team.
- **Kingsburg Police Department (KPD)** will work with KECSD administrators, including the Community Schools Director, to implement a School Resource Officer (SRO) Program. In addition to serving as an active, high profile Law Enforcement Officer, the SRO will work to improve school safety, positive youth development, and perceptions and relations between students, staff, and law enforcement officials. KPD also maintains a Community Resource Guide, aligned with Critical Incident Stress Management principles to aid families in times of crisis.
- **Kingsburg Lions Club** will serve as a linkage between KECSD and the local business community to spearhead projects that benefit the community schools initiative. Proposed projects include a “Farm to School” program to increase access to healthy, fresh food by incorporating local produce in school meals, improving nutrition and agricultural education, and establishing school-based farmers’ markets.
- **Fresno County Superintendent of Schools** will provide several services that improve the quality of KECSD community schools implementation, including coaching to support fidelity of MTSS/PBIS implementation, expanded learning program administrative support and staffing, and a mobile health clinic to provide mandatory school and recommended school immunizations to low-income students.
- **California Teaching Fellows Foundation** will provide highly qualified paraprofessionals to lead after school and summer academic assistance and youth enrichment programming.
- **Fresno State University Office of Community-Based Learning** will assist with recruiting, screening, and referring university students to work in KECSD extended learning programs and provide professional development to staff in “after school-style” academics and youth enrichment programming.
- **Fresno State University Office of Community and Economic Development** will continue to offer adult education classes to Kingsburg families through its Parent University, which includes classes in digital literacy, financial literacy, health and wellness, and parenting skills.

During CCSPP Project planning KECSD conducted a community resource scan to identify community agencies to strengthen relationships with throughout the CCSPP Project. These agencies include healthcare providers (e.g., Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health, Fresno County Office of Public Health, Crestwood Behavioral Health); social services providers (e.g., United Way, Centro La Familia, Central California Food Bank); and Fresno County organizations that can contribute to KECSD parent education and extend learning programs (e.g., Parent Institute for Quality Education, Reading and Beyond, Two Bit Circus).

E. Ongoing reflection and assessment to support continuous improvement

The Kingsburg community schools model strongly emphasizes ongoing assessment, review, reflection, and collaborative decision-making in order to inform continuous quality improvement efforts. Throughout the five-year CCSPP grant period, the Leadership Team and each school's Advisory Council will engage with an external evaluator to conduct formative and summative evaluations that include quantitative and qualitative assessments to determine (1) KECSO and its community schools' success in implementing the community schools model with fidelity and (2) the CCSPP Project's overall impact and success in meeting target performance measures.

To measure fidelity of implementation, the evaluator will create a rubric of implementation that quantifies expectations for implementation of each community school component. Expectations may be expressed in terms of the number of activities conducted, services offered, products created, trainings held, or participants served. Although implementation scales may vary, the rubric will categorize each component as not implemented, partially implemented, mostly implemented, or fully implemented. Applying a rubric of implementation at the site level will allow for comparison of implementation progress across KECSO schools and the use of implementation level as an independent variable in outcome studies.

To measure program impact, the evaluator will establish baseline data at the start of the project period across each measure to be assessed to determine the project's success in accomplishing the four objectives. Evaluation tools and methods will include (1) California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) results to assess students' academic achievement; (2) locally developed school culture and climate surveys to assess factors such as school climate, student engagement, and social-emotional development; (3) multiple measures that assess student behavioral outcomes (e.g., attendance, suspension/expulsion rates); (4) parent and community surveys and focus groups to obtain qualitative feedback regarding the perceived quality of community schools services; and (5) teacher/staff surveys to obtain qualitative feedback regarding the perceived quality of professional learning.

KECSO's CCSPP Leadership Team and each school's Advisory Council will meet quarterly to review evaluation results to determine the project's fidelity of implementation and overall impact on students, families, and school communities. During the final meeting of each year, the Leadership Team and Advisory Councils will engage stakeholders in determining project strengths and weaknesses and making improvement decisions to be implemented in the subsequent year. Rigorous project evaluation at both the site and district levels combined with ongoing collaborative reflection and continuous quality improvement will ensure CCSPP investments result in school-wide transformations that benefit Kingsburg students, families, and communities beyond the grant period. In addition to using evaluation results to guide continuous improvement efforts and fulfill CCSPP reporting mandates, the Leadership Team will carefully document the successes of the community schools model to strategically share findings with its community schools partners and stakeholders as well as with educational researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to contribute to the body of evidence supporting whole-child educational models.