Holtville Unified School District

CCSPP RFA, Cohort 2

CCSPP Plan - Freedom Academy of Imperial Valley

Freedom Academy of Imperial Valley 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:

- 73.1% Hispanic, 26.9% White
- 67.3% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
- 25% English learners
- 7.7% Migrant

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:

- We have Beyond SST that by function brings together multi-skilled team members who collaborate to support students. We have tiered interventions for academics implemented but for CCSPP we rely on our district wide mental health person. Teachers, who because of weekly meetings with students know about their students and their needs. In addition, we rely of Synergy to communicate student information to all stakeholders.
- Part-time counselor to support students experiencing challenging personal and academic situations has been hired.
- We are exploring trainings and relying on District Lead instruction to help with Trauma-informed practices training for all staff members.
- Teachers at the elementary and middle school level meet daily with students, and high school teachers meet weekly with students one on one to check in with them gauge where they are emotionally and integrating the District mental health person if needed, and provide any other support they can.

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

- Freedom Academy has had an increase in students who have experienced trauma/SEL and a small amount of ACES since 2019. In the past these students would not consider Freedom, but because of COVID, one of the issues is Social Emotional. That seems to attract these students to our independent study delivery model.
- Significant increase in Social-emotional learning and strength continues to be a challenge for our staff, especially coming out of the pandemic but we don't keep

records in an official capacity. We have accepted these students into the programs and they usually end up being sent back to their in-person school of origin because they are unwilling to keep up in the Freedom program. We have never had physical discipline issues requiring management involvement, just the academic changes.

- Freedom Academy does not keep records of SEL students that attend or apply for enrollment, but because it is a growing need we have started to develop relationships with the District's Mental Health person. In the past Freedom had taken the healthy kids survey, but this year because of our numbers we passed on the survey. As a district we participate in surveys that are provided in response to the LCAP.
    - 75% of students say their school contacts their parents if they are often late or absent from school
    - 50% of students say they look forward to coming to school most days

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.
- ***Racially Just and Restorative School Climates:*** 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 provide a broad course of study for all students, including CTE pathways. We currently offer Freedom students the opportunity to take courses concurrently at Holtville High School and vice versa. 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.
- **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 and English Language Advisory Committee.

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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 counselor / social worker / school psychologist to support the significant emotional needs of our student community.
- 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 12th 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 12th 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 = Projects Director
- Leadership Team = Principal, Counselor, Lead Teacher
- 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 1: Annual increase in student achievement for all students in all subject areas, including English Language Arts and Math, with a focus on accelerating student learning outcomes for target subgroups including English Learners, low-income pupils, and pupils identified as special education by providing students with instruction aligned to the state academic content and performance standards by highly qualified teachers.
- LCAP Goal 2: Provide a broad course of study to TK to 12 students that will prepare them for college and career upon graduation, with a focus on English Learners, Low-Income, Foster Youth, and students with exceptional needs.
- LCAP Goal 3: Provide an educational experience that promotes a culture of school connectedness and involvement, student health and wellbeing, and the safety and security of pupils, staff, and parents.