

Cutten Elementary School District

Form B: Project Abstract 2021–22 California Community Schools Partnership Program: Planning Grant Request for Applications

Vision for the proposed community schools planning project:

Like many districts, Cutten Elementary School District (CESD) offers services and supports aligned with the Community School Model and the four pillars. Our goal, like that of the Community School Model, is to partner with community agencies and local governments to align community resources to improve student outcomes. By having the capacity to develop partnerships, we will be able to provide an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. The pandemic has put a spotlight on our needs even more, and we realize there is a strong desire to align community and District services to better serve all students' needs -particularly at-risk students. However, at this time we lack the intentional, systematized alignment of services with the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

The proposal's vision is the systematized, sustainable alignment and delivery of support-tive services to students and families including committing to providing trauma-informed health, mental health, and social services for students within an MTSS on or near the school—in partnership with county agencies and other organizations. To accomplish this, the school and community partners must engage in a planning process with support and time to engage in a number of PDSA (Plan, Do, Study and Act) cycles focused on academic, behavioral and social emotional needs of our students, staff, community and school.

To achieve these goals we will not add more work to our already overburdened teachers, principals and staff. CESD will use Planning Grant funds to hire a full time Community School Development Lead/Student Support Coach (0.6 FTE Planning Grant funded and 0.4 FTE matching funded) who over the next two years will facilitate the PDSA process.

Describe the consortium and/or participating school sites :

The Cutten School District, in partnership with our community, provides students with the academic and social skills necessary to become contributing members of a global community. We do this by creating a joyful, student-centered, and orderly learning environment rich in the arts and sciences, where everyone knows they are respected members of the "Cutten-Ridgewood Family".

Transitional kindergarten through second grade students attend Ridgewood School, and third through sixth grade students attend Cutten School. Although we possess two CDS codes, we consider ourselves one school with two sites, separated from each other only by a 2.6 mile stretch of road. In light of this, and supported by the tightly--knit and extremely supportive community, the same families in attendance at both sites, and the

highly collaborative staff, it is nearly impossible to talk about the achievements and needs of one site without including the other site in the conversation. We are joined by a common vision, and a deep--seated commitment to the development of the whole child; the success of each site is dependent upon the other. An indication that our district is considered one of the most desired on the North Coast is that about 38% of our enrollment is comprised of interdistrict transfer students. Our families have a shared purpose; they value and actively support quality education for their children.

Information about potential programs and services to be provided :

As noted, current and potential programs and services must meet identified needs and align with the LCAP and MTSS, and align with the four pillars. Our greatest areas for potential expansion are expanding learning time and opportunities; transitioning preschool students in the TK education program; a more formal process for involving families in school leadership; and expanding and formally implementing delivery of services from community partners including Humboldt County Office of Education, Cal Poly Humboldt, College of the Redwoods, Indian Action Council, Foster Grandparent Program, Humboldt County Children's Behavioral Health, Remi Vista, Changing Tides, Special Beginnings (HCOE), Redwood Regional Center, and Two Feathers Native American Family Services.

How community and cooperating agencies will engage in planning, ongoing assessment and continuous improvement:

Through our LCAP and MTSS work, we have gathered input from both staff and community members. It is clear that without increased leadership and opportunity for students, families, teachers and staff to collaborate, students will not reach the academic and social emotional support needed to succeed. CESD has a PBIS leadership team currently being trained by the Humboldt County Office of Education Prevention and Intervention Department in best practices related to MTSS and PBIS. The team meets regularly and shares out with staff and community partners. Our PD and collaboration with the HCOE Prevention and Intervention Department the past two years made clear that without increasing the capacity for staffing and leadership at CESD, all students won't reach their full potential at school. To ensure all students succeed at school, increased collaboration between staff and families and the streamlining of support services are required.

(1) Integrated supports: CESD is a small school district, and we constantly strive to integrate student support systems; however, based on the needs of our students, and the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, more time and support is needed for our students and families. Services with outside agencies are not seamlessly integrated. One critical component of the planning proposal is dedicated staff time to develop and implement systems, agreements, and protocols that will integrate community supports (disproportionately impacted by the pandemic) into students' educational supports. This will be a key task of the Community School Development Lead/Student Support Coach.

(2) Family and community engagement: CESD works hard to collaborate with our families and community—but in this pandemic time when teachers and staff's energy has been so consumed with distance learning, independent study, and accommodating

student and family needs—there is room for improved and systematized methods of family and community engagement. As we discussed this topic with staff and community partners, the goal of more regular parent and family communication –which allows for more feedback—was universally agreed to as was the realization that developing improved and sustainable engagement protocols will require a planning process.

(3) Collaborative leadership and practices: CESD has established shared leadership practices for teachers, staff and students (leadership team, School Climate team, PBIS team, Student Council). But while it's relatively easy to get student and staff input, parent and community involvement is much more limited to processes like LCAP, Site Council and other Parent Committees. We recognize the communication and feedback process described above is necessary for increasing family and community input and participation in school leadership.

4) Expanded learning time & opportunities: CESD students have the opportunity to participate in out of school time activities including sports, clubs, and afterschool care and many CESD students take advantage of these opportunities. Where we fall short however, is in the areas of enrichment, and real-world learning opportunities (including tutoring, mentoring, volunteer opportunities, and promoting STEM opportunities). Systematically expanding learning time and activities will be a core task of the to-be-hired Community School Development Lead.

Overall, the district is partially addressing all four pillars, but we recognize to implement aligned services with fidelity, there is much work to be done over the next two years.

Other factors that demonstrate need not included in the Evaluation Criteria: This isolated and impoverished region is cut off from resources available elsewhere, especially families on remote tribal lands including the state's two largest tribes and reservations—the Yurok and Hoopa Valley Tribes. Locally, logging and fishing once provided careers for high school grads and dropouts but are now a fraction of what they were. Humboldt has a 20.5% poverty rate (vs. 11.5% statewide).

Crime, Drugs & Alcohol: Humboldt has been the US' largest legal and illegal cannabis producer and has California's 2nd highest Opioid Overdose Deaths rate (21.03 per 100,000 vs. a state rate of 5.22). It has one of the state's highest arrest rates (alcohol arrest rate is 3.3x the CA rate). In 2018 it had the state's 2nd highest homicide rate. Other challenges local families face are also reflected in child abuse rates. The 2019 rate of child abuse and neglect allegations (139.3 per 1,000 children) is over 2x the state rate (67.0 per 1,000). For American Indian children the rate is 227.7 per 1,000.

Humboldt has California's highest ACEs rate: 30.8% of adults report experiencing **four or more ACEs** versus 13% statewide and 11% nationally. Native American, immigrant, and low-income communities are particularly prone to ACEs. A 2013 study by the Area Health Education Center of Washington State University found students with **three+ ACEs** are 3x as likely to experience academic failure, six times as likely to have behavioral problems, and 5x as likely to have poor attendance.