

# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TEMPLATE

## Instructions

This California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP) Implementation Plan Template has been created by the State Transformational Assistance Center for Community Schools (S-TAC), in partnership with the California Department of Education (CDE). This template was designed to support implementation applicants with the requirement of submitting an implementation plan **(per site)** as part of their Request For Application and to support CCSPP grantees with community school implementation more generally. It should be considered a dynamic document that is periodically updated to reflect the progress and needs of your community school(s), legislative updates, and course corrections informed by your continuous improvement and school community engagement processes. **The Local Education Agency (LEA) is referenced throughout the template to encourage collaboration between the LEA and sites on the implementation of the CCSPP.**

The Implementation Plan should be guided by the [California Community Schools Framework](#) (CA CS Framework), and the [Capacity-Building Strategies: A Developmental Rubric](#). To build on existing objectives for community schools, alignment with overarching LEA goals and objectives as stated on Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) and School Plans for Student Achievement (SPSAs) is strongly recommended.

LEAs and school sites must work collaboratively with community partners, including families/caregivers, staff, students, district leaders, inter-agency representatives, etc., to develop and review the CCSPP Implementation Plan. The Lead LEA, working with school sites, is responsible for the plan and the oversight of any community partners or subcontractors. The LEA should include any partners in the development and review of the plan. It is recommended that the plan be reviewed biannually (twice a year), at least. Note that the Implementation Plan Template asks you to focus on the critical processes that each school and LEA must develop in order to execute the vision of community schools in order to achieve desired outcomes. The Annual Progress Report (APR) will ask grantees to reflect upon and report on those outcomes.

The Implementation Plan will be submitted to CDE as part of the Cohort 3 Implementation Grant by those who are applying. This Implementation Plan Template will be updated as the CCSPP accountability system is developed.

## CA CS Framework Overview

A community school is any school serving pre-Kindergarten through high school students through a “whole-child” approach, with an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. It is an equity-driven and assets-building school transformation program.

Adopted in 2022, the CA CS Framework identifies 4 Pillars of Community Schools, Key Conditions for Learning, Cornerstone Commitments, and Proven Practices as follows:

**Pillars of Community Schools:** Integrated Student Supports; Family and Community Engagement; Collaborative Leadership and Practices for Educators and Administrators and; Extended Learning Time and Opportunities

**Key Conditions for Learning in a Community School:** Supportive environmental conditions that foster strong relationships and community; Productive instructional strategies that support motivation, competence, and self-directed learning; Social and emotional learning (SEL) that fosters skills, habits, and mindsets that enable academic progress, efficacy, and productive behavior, and; System of supports that enable healthy development, respond to student needs, and address learning barriers.

**Cornerstone Commitments of Community Schools:** A commitment to assets-driven and strength-based practice; A commitment to racially just and restorative school climates; A commitment to powerful, culturally proficient and relevant instruction; and a commitment to shared decision making and participatory practices.

**Proven Practices of Community Schools:** Community Asset Mapping and Gap Analysis; A Community School Coordinator; Site-Based and LEA-Based Advisory Councils, and Integrating and Aligning with Other Relevant Programs.

The California Community Schools Framework is synthesized through the [Overarching Values](#) and operationalized through the *Capacity-Building Strategies: A Developmental Rubric*.

More information about these key concepts or community school components can be found at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr22/documents/jan22item02a1.docx> and at <https://www.acoe.org/Page/2461>, including [the CA CS Framework](#).

## Capacity-Building Strategies Overview

The S-TAC has launched the *Capacity-Building Strategies: A Developmental Rubric* to serve as a road map for both LEAs and school sites and is meant to enhance the adoption, implementation and sustainability of community schools. The Capacity-Building Strategies include a focus on:

1. Shared Commitment, Understanding and Priorities
2. Centering Community-based Learning
3. Collaborative Leadership
4. Sustaining Staff and Resources
5. Strategic Community Partnerships

The *Developmental Rubric* can be accessed [here](#), and is best used as a side-by-side companion document as grantees are completing this implementation plan.

# CCSPP: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## School Site Contact Information

PUENTE Charter Elementary School

## Strategies, Priorities and Goals

Describe the main process goals and action steps for the school site's community schools initiative. Add lines as needed. Use the phase-specific activities outlined in the Developmental Rubric as a guide.

### Strategy 1: Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities

When interest-holders unite in a shared understanding of and commitment to the community school strategy, it drives democratic collaboration and transparency. Deep listening and authentic relationship-building (via a robust Needs and Assets Assessment process) are critical to identifying collective priorities and for monitoring progress towards meeting shared goals.

#### Part A: Shared Commitment, Understanding and Priorities Built Around the Overarching Values

After engaging interest-holders to answer the question, "why a community school for my school?", share your response to that question in the box below. In your response, be sure to indicate how your site's understanding of community schools reflects its commitment to the CA CS Framework through the Overarching Values (Overarching Values can be accessed [here](#)):

1. Racially-just, relationship-centered spaces (Relationship Focus)
2. Shared power (Shared input)
3. Classroom-community connections
4. A focus on continuous improvement and possibility thinking

Describe the developmental plans for ensuring these values are reflected in your community schools work:

PUENTE Charter Elementary School (a single-site LEA) needs a community school because it is located in an underserved community serving largely English language learners in households at or below the poverty line within the community of Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles. These households typically suffer from poor air quality due to their close proximity to freeways, higher rates of health disparities (e.g., obesity and COVID-19), lack of affordable housing, and lower rates of high school and post-secondary completion by residents. Post-pandemic, grade-level proficiency at our school has dropped, and the chronic absenteeism rate has risen, especially among English Learners (ELs) and Transitional Kindergarten (TK) to first-grade-level students. PUENTE Charter is located within PUENTE Learning Center, a Boyle Heights nonprofit organization that has provided high-quality community services through multi-generational educational programs and wraparound services for the past 39 years. This positions us as an exceptional site to implement the Community School model for our students and families.

In the current academic year (2023-24), PUENTE Charter is serving 300 students in grades TK-5. Our current student demographics are 97% Hispanic, 2% African American, 1% White, 12% Students with Disabilities, 26% English Learners, and 83% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, demonstrating the need for community school services. 82% of our students reside within the zip codes of 90023, 90033, and 90063. The COVID Vulnerability & Recovery Index for this service area was Tier 5 – the highest tier for community vulnerability and recovery.

Further community needs also underscore the urgency for community school services. Exposure to high levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5), for example, poses a significant danger to human health, leading to higher rates of cardiopulmonary illnesses. More than 89.99% of Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles residents are exposed to high PM2.5 levels compared to half of Los Angeles County residents. In our service area, childhood obesity is 53.73% compared to 42.84% countywide, and the adult obesity rate is 32.91% compared to 26.81% countywide. Our service area has a lower average median income (\$54,440 compared to \$76,367 countywide), a high renter's rate (75% compared to 53.8% countywide), lower rate of residents over the age of 24 with a Bachelor's degree (10.8% compared to 34% countywide) and higher rate of residents with less than a high school diploma (45% compared to 20% countywide). Student grade-level proficiency coming out of the pandemic has fluctuated from 54.95% in ELA and 47.78% in Math in 2021-2022 to 42.97% in ELA and 39.06% in Math in 2022-2023. The challenge of lower grade-level proficiency rates is compounded by the increase in chronic absenteeism post-pandemic. In 2022-23, chronic absenteeism at our school was 34.1%, a dramatic rise of 12.9 percentage points from the previous year and a primary target of intended community school resources in community school implementation. For EL students, the chronic absenteeism rate was 41.4%, with a 21.4 percentage point increase from the prior year. We are committed to supporting the significant number of English Learner students at PUENTE Charter, reflected in our 26.19% ELPAC rate of English Learners reclassified to English proficient compared to nearby elementary schools (14% average), local school district (16.27% LAUSD), and the state (16.5%). Community School funds are essential to provide resources to address these needs.

PUENTE Charter is in the “transforming” phase of building trust and promoting a positive school climate in service to the community essential to creating *racially-just and relationship-centered spaces and school climates (Cornerstone Commitment)*. Established in 2002, PUENTE Charter provided kindergarten-only education services for seventeen years. In response to parent and community requests, in 2018, PUENTE Charter expanded from kindergarten to TK-5 following the slow-growth model and served its inaugural 5th-grade cohort in 2022-2023. Post-pandemic, PUENTE Charter and PUENTE Learning Center are dedicated to creating a racially just, positive, and safe school climate by designing and implementing a Bullying Prevention Plan incorporated within the comprehensive school safety plan, establishing student-led conferences where students demonstrate responsibility for their academic performance, providing free health screenings and services (free vision and oral exams) at our school for students and families, increasing parent engagement and participation opportunities, and maintaining a safe and clean facility. In 2022-23, student and parent internal surveys reported that 94% of students experienced a sense of safety at our school, while 97% experienced school connectedness. 99% of parents reported a sense of safety, and 92% reported school connectedness. There was 100% retention of all classroom teachers from 2022-23 into the 2023-24 school year, evidence of our strong foundation of positive school climate and culture and great success in a time of school staffing challenges. Currently, 60% of our PUENTE instructional team are from the community they now serve at PUENTE Charter, with 92% Latina/o, and 8% Asian American. This greatly supports our school in creating relationship-centered spaces. Our school staff forms a collaborative relationship with our families through regular communication to discuss attendance expectations and resources and support services discussed below. We also utilize the ParentSquare application for daily communication, enabling the school to regularly engage with families. ParentSquare facilitates the sharing of information regarding their child's progress, upcoming events, and opportunities for involvement. Through ParentSquare, PUENTE ensures accessibility for all families, housing newsletters, parent-teacher communications, announcements, and bulletins.

Based on the three phases of the CCSPP developmental rubric, PUENTE Charter has moved from the “visioning” to the “engaging” phase of demonstrating **shared power** and a *commitment to shared decision-making and participatory practices (Cornerstone Commitment)* in the school’s operation, with the involvement of parents and caregivers in decision-making through elements such as student attendance review meetings (SART meetings). This commitment is evidenced by the impact of the yearly student, parent, and staff surveys, with strong parent input in decision-making (through membership on the PUENTE Charter Board of Directors and on advisory committees at our school that include the English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), the English Learner Parent Advisory Council (EL-PAC), the Parent Advisory Council (PAC), and the new Community School Steering Committee. During CCSPP planning, PUENTE Charter established the Community Schools Steering Committee with a membership of six parents and five PUENTE Charter administrative staff (our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Principal, Vice Principal, Community School Coordinator, and Director of Special Education). As we move to the implementation phase, the Community Schools Steering Committee will join the Charter School Advisory Committee and become the Charter Community School Advisory Committee with goals of increasing parent membership and include school instructional staff, community partners, and student representation while focusing on specific issues with tangible results annually. For students, shared power will target fifth-grade students, who will create and lead a Student Leadership Council. At least one student from the Council will participate in the Charter Community School Advisory Committee. Community members will be invited to every Charter Community School Advisory Committee with the goal of at least two partners attending each meeting to provide information on services and to share in decision-making.



Current **classroom-community connections** in place at PUENTE Charter include introductory meetings with each enrolled student's family prior to the start of every school year, Coffee with the Principal, integrated services workshops, school-wide events, and use of teachers from diverse backgrounds that not only reflect the school community but reside in it and understand community challenges faced by students and families. Each August, our teachers meet virtually with each parent and family as the introductory meeting to welcome families to the school, communicate expectations, build positive relationships, provide information on school resources, and identify family/student needs. Monthly Coffee with the Principal, integrated services workshops (college and career readiness, counseling services, Health & Wellness, Nutrition, Immigration Rights, and Tenants Rights), and schoolwide events (Meet & Greet, Family Nights, Literacy Night, and monthly recognitions) further strengthen this classroom-community connection. This is further supported by student and parent satisfaction levels, as demonstrated in surveys and our strong teacher retention track record. To support these connections, our teachers weave culturally relevant themes into the school's curriculum. Our school will move from the "engaging" to "transforming" phase around classroom-community connections by providing professional development opportunities to PUENTE Charter staff, targeting community building, local history and knowledge, and civic engagement. In spring 2023, PUENTE Charter established a community garden as a way to promote healthy eating and habits by incorporating the cuisines and history, not just of Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries, but from cultures from all over the world. Goals and actions for strengthening classroom-community connections will include input from the Charter Community School Advisory Committee and student leadership council. We have also established relationships with community partners like Comp Therapy, which have deepened our understanding and facilitated collaboration and engagement with underrepresented families at our school. PUENTE has a *commitment to powerful, culturally proficient, and relevant instruction (cornerstone commitment)*. We are implementing the Second Step SEL curriculum and the Calm Classroom mindfulness curriculum as part of MTSS and will combine this with robust counseling services for students and families. In the first year of implementation, we will implement the second year of the Abriendo Puertas family engagement program for TK/K families and expand it by ten parents annually. All students will participate in social skills groups twice per month and implement SEL practices daily in the classrooms. The full-time School Counselor will lead SEL sessions in all classrooms each month. Student engagement emphasizes *asset-driven and strength-based practices (cornerstone commitment)* to value the languages and cultures of students and families. We offer activities to honor our students' identities, such as regular and ongoing celebrations each year, like Hispanic Heritage Month, Dia de Muertos, African American History Month, and Women's History Month.

PUENTE Charter is in the “engaging” phase of demonstrating a **focus on continuous improvement**. We developed a baseline data portfolio and will annually update the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) based on academic success measured through five indicators of the CA School Dashboard (English Learner Progress, Suspension Rate, English Language Arts and Math Academics and Chronic Absenteeism). Our charter school will continue to share the progress of LCAP goals with various stakeholders through the various shared leadership structures (PUENTE Learning Center board of directors and committees, ELAC, DELAC, EL-PAC, Charter Community School Advisory Committee, and student leadership council as discussed above), and will establish at least one public presentation and annual reporting of Community School vision, plan, and progress each year during implementation. Community school implementation activities and services will be integrated into the LCAP, with alignment with its goals and outcomes each year.

**Part B:** As part of the planning process, you have gone through an initial process of understanding needs and assets. As you initiate the implementation grant process and obtain site-level resources, please reflect on how you will go deeper in this needs and asset assessment process to engage the entire community in identifying their top community school priorities and vision. Please reflect on how you will engage different groups (administrators, certificated staff, classified staff, students, family members, community members and community partners) and identify the processes (e.g., surveys, one-on-one interviews, focus groups, visioning exercises, meetings/forums, etc.) you will use to engage them. Describe how you will engage historically marginalized student and family groups.

PUENTE Charter School is in the Engaging phase of Strategy 2. During the past two years of Planning, our school reached its goal of engaging 75% to 100% of students, staff, families, and community members in identifying their top community school priorities. We completed the needs and assets assessment to inform PUENTE Charter’s Community School implementation plan and priorities in alignment with our LCAP. Common priorities expressed by students, families, and school staff included an expansion of support around social-emotional wellness and learning loss, governance opportunities and participation for parents and families, and community partnerships. The CSC will lead an annual update to the assets and needs assessment using this same process and then will update the implementation accordingly.

Our school will also take the following measures to engage our community in implementation.

- In January 2023, PUENTE Charter received the Phase 3 CA MTSS School grant through the California Department of Education (CDE). 90% of our school staff will complete the CA MTSS Pathway Certification by the conclusion of the academic year 2024-2025. Our staff, led by our CEO, is developing a common language and framework for thinking about systems of care across academics, behavior, and mental health. In implementation, our school staff will construct stronger prevention and early identification components in MTSS (Tier 1) while also expanding service referral community partners in Tiers 2-3.



- PUENTE Charter hired a full-time School Counselor to lead social skills groups for students using our MTSS Framework, SEL sessions in all classrooms, support teachers with Second Step SEL implementation, and quarterly Coffee with the Counselor workshops.
- We provided homework support and tutoring to students identified as English Learners or below grade-level proficiency at PUENTE Charter through a partnership with College Corps, who provide paid internships to students at East Los Angeles College and California State University Los Angeles to serve as tutors.
- Our charter school created a new governance opportunity with the Community School Steering Committee. The CS Steering Committee held one meeting in 2021-22 and increased to three meetings in 2022-23. There are six parents involved in the committee, with the goal of increasing this number by two each year. There are currently no teachers or students on the CS Steering Committee, and our goal is to increase their membership to at least one in each category during the first implementation year. There are also no community partners on the Committee, and the goal is to increase membership to include at least two community partners each year during implementation. At the same time, Committee membership requires additional professional development opportunities to increase participation and serve our community school. We are exploring resources that include RampUp for Student Success by Communities in Schools, the Professional Learning Series by the Learning Policy Institute, the Coalition for Community Schools, and the Institute for Educational Leadership.
- In implementation, we will work to include our community school in the PUENTE Learning Center Board of Directors' meeting structure as PUENTE Charter's main partner.
- In an effort to increase parent and family participation, PUENTE Charter switched to student-led conferences during year one of the Community School planning phase, and parent participation increased by 46 percentage points from 42% in fall 2021 to 88% in spring 2022. Our goal is to see an overall increase in parent and family engagement with at least 90% participation in student-led conferences and at least 20% participation in Coffee with the Principal.
- We also welcome new community partners in support of health, wellness, and food security and will expand these efforts in implementation. In 2022, our school established a partnership with Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry at USC to provide free oral health care (informational workshops for students and families, and free exams and fluoride varnish for students) on-site at least three weeks annually. To address food insecurity, we secured a partnership with Food Finders and will continue to pursue other partners during implementation.
- Our school regularly engages with students and families from historically marginalized groups, so a critical need and services provided targeted teacher professional development support in areas such as cultural awareness. PUENTE works with parents and community partners to host multiple multicultural events on our campus, including Family Nights, Literacy Night, Meet & Greet, and monthly recognition ceremonies. These include Integrated Services Workshops such as College/career readiness, counseling services, Health & Wellness, Nutrition, Immigration Rights, and Tenant Rights.

**Part C:** As sites complete the needs and asset assessment process, they identify collective priorities that form the initial focus of their community school implementation efforts. Given your preliminary needs and asset assessment, please share three draft collective priorities that you anticipate arising as you achieve deeper engagement with students, staff, families and community members.

One of the priorities should align with a support listed in the [Whole Child and Family Supports Inventory](#) (e.g., integrated student supports, authentic family and community engagement, collaborative leadership, extended learning time and opportunities, positive and restorative school climate, community-based curriculum and pedagogy, etc.). The collective priorities you list below may be the same goals you will ultimately report in the APR, or they may change throughout the course of your first year as you continually engage students, staff, families and community members.

**Draft Collective Priority****Outcome/Indicators you aim to improve**

<p>Integrated student supports: Develop an MTSS inclusive of mental health and SEL to address key barriers to learning with systems that ensure a safe, welcoming, supporting learning environment for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue staff training on MTSS through June 2025, with 90% of teachers completing CA MTSS Certification by December 2024.</li> <li>- Identify and prioritize agencies and service providers for partnership, referral, and executed service MOUs, at least one in the area of dental health and mental/behavioral health (Care Solace).</li> <li>- Collect data on community school service utilization using the Panorama data system. (Alex will lead and Maria will input tutoring data).</li> <li>- Decrease chronic absenteeism to a rate at or below 10% by year five (updated from year three) of implementation, as detailed in our LCAP.</li> </ul>
<p>Strengthen collaborative leadership at PUENTE Charter focused on Charter Community School Advisory Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Community School Steering Committee will become the Charter Community School Advisory Committee embedded within the board structure of PUENTE Learning Center to report at every quarterly board meeting.</li> <li>- Increase Charter Community School Advisory Committee membership by two annually in each of the following categories: students, parents, teachers, and community partners. (met the goal of adding 2 parents in Sept. 2024)</li> <li>- Provide at least one professional development opportunity for the Charter Community School Advisory Committee.</li> </ul>

<p>Improve Family and Community Engagement through staff professional development and multiple modes of family communication and involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At least one professional development opportunity for PUENTE Charter staff to improve family and community engagement is completed each year.</li> <li>- At least 90% participation in student-led conferencing and 20% participation by school parents in Coffee with the Principal each year.</li> <li>- Secure during implementation at least one new partner to assist with expanding family access to educational workshops that prioritize home-school connections, healthy food &amp; nutrition, immigration &amp; legal support, how to understand and support Math in home settings, and college preparation for elementary parents.</li> </ul>
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What new services will be provided under each of the four pillars of community schools?

Services to be provided by PUENTE Charter School during community school implementation include the following services:

- **Integrated Student Supports** - MTSS provides data-based decision-making related to program improvement, high-quality instruction and intervention, social and emotional learning, and positive behavioral supports. It offers a commitment to *assets-driven and strength-based practice* (cornerstone commitment) and includes screening, progress monitoring, a multi-level prevention system, and data-based decision-making, with a continuum (Tiers 1, 2, & 3) of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral instructional and intervention support. Continued improvement of a Coordination of Services Team (COST) as a monthly forum for identifying and assessing students in need of Tier 2 or 3 supports in Year 1 with review and refinement of duties and services in Years 2 and 3, and additional staff will join COST (Director of Special Education and Intervention and Instructional Coach will join Principal, Vice Principal, and School Counselor) in Year 1. We are implementing the Second Step SEL curriculum and the Calm Classroom mindfulness curriculum in implementation Year 1 as part of MTSS and combined with more robust counseling services for students and families. All students participate in social skills groups twice per month and implement SEL practices daily in the classroom. The full-time School Counselor will lead SEL sessions in all classrooms each month. According to parent/family surveys in Spring 2023, the most important services to provide include social-emotional learning, wellness, and mental health services.
- **Family and Community Engagement** - Increased parent stakeholder engagement meetings provided each year include our Community School Steering Committee conducted quarterly, English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) (monthly), Charter School Advisory Committee and Wellness Committee meetings (quarterly), All-Parent Meetings (quarterly), Coffee with the Principal meetings (monthly), and Governing Board meeting (quarterly). Increased student-led conferencing in Family-Teacher conferences is provided twice annually. An increased number of monthly workshops (Community Connection Nights) will be hosted by PUENTE and our community nonprofit agency (PUENTE Learning Center). New professional development trainings and opportunities are provided for parents and community partners, as discussed above. As part of Family Engagement, parents in Planning consider that PUENTE does a good job of keeping families informed with surveys, Coffee with the Principal, Parent Square, and student-led conferencing.
- **Collaborative Leadership and Practices of Educators and Administrators** - expanded professional development on MTSS in Year 1, leading to 90% of teachers completing CA MTSS certification and earning badges that encourage reflection on their beliefs and attitudes with the goal of creating a more inclusive and equitable school environment. Additional professional development will be provided in the areas of Community School implementation and continuous improvement, school culture, community building, increased PD for supporting English Language Learners, and social-emotional learning. Professional development opportunities for staff will continue to deepen their understanding of the experiences and needs of underrepresented families. This includes training on cultural competence, implicit bias, and effective family engagement strategies. For Collaboration and Shared Leadership, parents in Planning surveys stressed the importance of school meetings and workshops for families (92% considered Important or Very Important), twice-yearly surveys and monthly Coffees (94%), and expanded opportunities for school governance involvement (81%).

- **Extended Learning Time** - PUENTE will work with our after-school provider, Think Together, to increase extended learning time and opportunities to create a true nine-hour school day (including three hours of extended learning). This will include professional development for greater alignment between the core school day and expanded learning time, with increased ELA and math tutoring options, PUENTE teachers working with extended day staff to identify opportunities for academic reinforcement of English Language Development (ELD), and clubs and extracurricular activities to meet student and parent interest. According to our parent/family surveys (Spring 2023), the most important resources to target include academic tutoring (67%), sports/recreation (65%), Visual Arts (62%), Homework Help (59%), and College Readiness (59%).

## Strategy 2: Centering Community-Based Learning

Community-Based Learning (CBL) builds on the rich, diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students, families, and educators. Delivered in learning environments that are relationship-centered and ensure a sense of belonging, CBL builds on community assets, cultural wealth, funds of knowledge, and indigenous ways of knowing. Community-Based Learning is powerful instruction that increases student engagement by connecting classroom learning to real-life experiences and to issues that are relevant to students' lives and communities, improving their sense of ownership and agency.

Describe your goals and action steps to assist educators in learning about students and families as well as understanding the theoretical roots and practical elements of community-based learning.

We address the Four Key Conditions for Learning in our community school development and implementation. *Supportive environmental conditions that foster strong relationships and community* include hiring a Community School Coordinator to engage with parents during and outside of school hours and to communicate regarding opportunities for services and involvement at our school. Our charter school is also hiring a full-time Counselor and Assistant Principal to support student counseling and supportive services for their social-emotional health. PUENTE embraces parent and family engagement through the lens of the ecology of parent engagement (Hong 2011). This guides parents through participation Tiers that include *Induction* (introducing parents to the world of schools), *Integration* (developing their school presence), and *Investment* (parents development leadership roles). Our school provides staff training to implement trauma-informed Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), SEL supports for students (such as Second Step), restorative practices, and regular virtual and in-person communication with parents/guardians. PD for teachers targets behavior management and program alignment of the MTSS and PBIS models. Staff receive trainings in trauma-informed and community challenges such as equity and diversity.

*Productive instructional strategies that support motivation, competence, and self-directed learning* include the use of student assessment data, teacher observations, school climate surveys, evidence of implementation from professional development sessions, and stakeholder feedback. It includes classroom observations, feedback, and PD support that covers practices like promoting a growth mindset and resilience while ensuring student collaboration and voice throughout our charter school.



*Social and emotional learning that fosters skills, habits, and mindsets that enable academic progress, efficacy, and productive behavior* is provided through facilitated social-emotional learning workshops for students through the implementation of the Second Step SEL Curriculum and Calm Classroom mindfulness training. This includes SEL sessions in all classrooms, support for teachers with Second Step SEL implementation, and family workshops. We will add a full-time Counselor and an Assistant Principal to support school culture with enhanced and robust counseling services. Our parent organization (PUENTE Learning Center) will provide *Unidos US* parent engagement programs, *Abriendo Puertas* for parents of children ages 0-5, and *Padres Comprometidos*, a program to build a college-going culture.

*Systems of support that enable healthy development, respond to student needs, and address learning barriers* are provided through the implementation of multi-tiered systems of support to maximize resources for students most in need while addressing academic, behavioral, and socioemotional needs of students. Following the MTSS model, service classifications move from Tier 1 (serving all students) through Tier 2 (targeted supports individually and in small groups) to Tier 3 (intensive one-on-one supports to students and families in high need). There is also a great need for expanded teacher professional development and activities to ensure that services in each of the three MTSS Tiers are implemented in ways to engage students and families. PUENTE received the Phase 3 CA MTSS Pathway Certification for Schools grant in January 2023. By the end of the 2024-25 school year, 90% of school staff, including teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators, will complete the CA MTSS Pathway Certification.

## Site Level Goals and Measures of Progress

Goals	Action Steps
Our school will support an increased number of parents with resources to address challenges faced by students and families each implementation year.	<p>Implement the second year of the Abriendo Puertas family engagement program for TK/K families in 2024-25 and expand by ten parents each subsequent implementation year.</p> <p>Charter Community School Advisory Committee and the Student Leadership Council will provide two recommendations each quarter on effective community-based learning initiatives and activities to be provided at PUENTE Charter beginning in the first implementation year.</p>
Increase staff and parent time devoted to communication and incorporation of community school and community-based learning resources.	<p>PUENTE staff, working with parents and community partners, will complete the six-part Professional Learning Series on community schools by the Learning Policy Institute by August 2024.</p> <p>PUENTE teachers and administrative staff complete the Communities in Schools <i>RampUP for Student Success</i> program in 2024-25 and 2025-26.</p>

## **Strategy 3: Collaborative Leadership**

Shared decision-making ensures all interest-holders have a voice in the transformation process and fosters shared power of the strategy. Collaborative leadership improves coordination of services, fosters supportive relationships, results in decisions that are widely accepted and implemented, and supports sustainability of the effort.

At the system level, LEAs establish a system-level steering committee/advisory council to conduct exploration activities and to provide crucial guidance to school-level implementers. At the site level, schools map and assess the current shared governance structures (where and how decisions are made) in their building and community, identifying all existing school-site and local neighborhood teams, networks, or working groups to understand their purpose and composition. Schools then launch or revise site-level shared leadership structure(s) to facilitate democratic participation and decision-making among students, staff, families, and community members.

Describe your goals for strengthening collaborative leadership.

## Site Level Goals and Measures of Progress

Goals	Action Steps
Strengthen the structure and impact of the Charter Community School Advisory Committee by the end of the 2024-25 school year. This will include establishing key communication channels regarding activities between the committee and key stakeholder groups as described in Action Steps at right.	<p>Development of a communication structure between the Charter Community School advisory committee and multiple stakeholders (students, families, teachers, and community partners) and more democratic engagement on major decisions at the school and LEA levels.</p> <p>Monthly social media posts on Community School activities.</p> <p>Updates on Community School progress and activities in the quarterly newsletter available through Parent Square, PUENTE Charter and PUENTE Learning Center websites, and News/Events page on Community Schools activities.</p> <p>Quarterly one-on-one meetings with community partners before Community meetings (service plans, finalizing MOUs). Reformat PUENTE Charter and PUENTE Learning Center website to include a webpage dedicated to the Community School vision, plan, goals, and progress.</p>
Increase the membership of the Charter Community School Advisory Committee by the end of the 2024-25 school year through actions at right.	<p>Recruit at least two 5th grade students each year via presentations in classrooms and teacher recommendations.</p> <p>Recruit at least one teacher each year via school leadership and teacher recommendations.</p> <p>Recruit at least two community partners each year through parent input (e.g., Coffee with the Principal) and recommendations from the Charter Community School Advisory Committee.</p>

Describe the system of shared governance and site-level leadership structure at your community school (this could be a visual like an organizational chart or other graphic):

PUENTE Charter School is a single-site independent charter school and Local Educational Agency (LEA) affiliated with PUENTE Learning Center, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles community. PUENTE Learning Center is governed by its Board of Directors with several standing committees: Audit and Compliance, CEO Review, Charter School Advisory, Advancement, Finance and Investment, and Governance and Nominating. PUENTE Charter and PUENTE Learning Center host separate, quarterly meetings. Our Charter School Board of Directors currently has six members, one of whom is a Charter School parent. Within PUENTE Charter, there are multiple advisory committees: the English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC), the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), the English Learner Parent Advisory Council (EL-PAC), the Parent Advisory Council (PAC), the Charter School Advisory, and the new Community School Steering Committee (CSSC). ELAC, DELAC, and EL-PAC provide an authentic parent voice on matters important to the EL student community, host a total of eight meetings annually, and currently have 13 members. CSSC focuses on monitoring effectiveness and evaluation framework, partnerships and engagement, continuous improvement, and accountability, hosts three meetings annually, and currently has 12 members (7 parents, Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Special Education, Community Services Coordinator, and PUENTE Learning Center's Chief Executive Officer). As PUENTE Charter moves from the planning to the implementation phase of the Community School model, the Community School Steering Committee will join and become one with the Charter Community School Advisory Committee. Each of these Advisory Committees, during implementation will create a streamlined review and recommendation process for recommended services and partnerships to be presented to the Charter Community School Advisory Committee. These recommendations will be sent to the Board for consideration each quarter.

Refer to organizational chart

## Strategy 4: Sustaining Staff and Resources

A focus on staffing and sustainability ensures that the necessary human and financial resources are available to maintain the strategy over time, and to sustain continuous progress and improvement.

Describe your goals and action steps for ensuring that: staffing serves the target student population, LEAs recruit and hire diverse, multilingual staff to support site-level work, including an LEA-level Community School Director/Coordinator. Schools hire site-level coordinators. Both sites and systems develop sustainability plans to ensure core staffing is sustained through long-term funding.

## Site Level Goals and Measures of Progress

Goals	Action Steps
Create and hire the role of Community School Coordinator to lead the LEA and single school site implementation plan to be completed by May 2024	<p>Create the role with school leadership and Charter Community School Advisory Committee in consideration of the PUENTE Charter Community School vision. This will be completed by May 2024</p> <p>Promote the position to the current PUENTE Charter and PUENTE Learning Center staff who meet the role's qualifications and reflect the PUENTE community. Completed by May-June 2024.</p> <p>Hire the CSC by July 2024</p> <p>Yearly performance reviews of CSC completed by the Principal each year.</p>
Build sustainability of mental health services through Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT), or other billing through an executed MOU with a nonprofit partner by the end of the 2024-25 school year.	Recruit a nonprofit partner to provide services on the PUENTE campus for students and families. Non-profit partner will handle administrative and billing functions and receive reimbursement through a contract with the LA County Department of Mental Health through funding streams such as EPSDT, MHSA, PEI, and targeted case management funds. MOU with nonprofit partner executed by June 2025.
PUENTE Charter will develop a long-term sustainability plan to ensure continued funding after CCSPP funds end completed by June 2024 and updated by June each subsequent implementation year.	The Principal will work with the CSC and PUENTE Learning Center Vice President of Advancement to develop a long-term sustainability plan of blended public and private implementation funding that will be updated each year based on community school needs and services.

## Key Staff/Personnel

Brenda Meza	School Site Principal
Diana Juarez	Vice Principal
Jocelyn Castillo	Associate of Program Operations
To be hired	School Counselor
Dominic Armendariz	Director of Early Education
Matt Wells	Vice President of Advancement, PUENTE Learning Center

To be hired	Community School Coordinator
Michele Wolfe	Vice President of Programs, PUENTE Learning Center
Maria Esparza	Volunteer Services Manager

Describe the plans or steps you are considering to build sustainability beyond the life of your implementation grant:

PUENTE Charter School revenue in place that demonstrates our strong financial position include State of California Local Control Formula Funds (LCFF), Proposition 30 - Education Protection Account, Special Education income, State Lottery, and Non-property Lottery Education Appointment, Block Grant K-12, other state revenue, and district payment in lieu of property tax. PUENTE Charter receives Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) funds and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) I & II funds. Our charter school has secured Phase 3 of CA Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), After School Education & Safety (ASES), and California State Preschool Program (CSPP) funding. Through an MOU with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Division of Adult and Career Education (DACE) East Los Angeles Occupational Center (ELAOC), PUENTE Learning Center serves as an off-site Adult Education Program of ELAOC to offer English as a Second Language, high school diploma and equivalency, and training in career technical education programs.

Our charter school is committed to implementing the Community School model in partnership with our main partner, PUENTE Learning Center. Annually, the PUENTE Learning Center raises over \$2.2 million in private donations, special events, and grants from foundational, government, and nonprofit entities. PUENTE Learning Center employs a four-member Advancement Department to also support the charter school that includes the Vice President of Advancement, Senior Grants Officer, Marketing and Communications Manager, and an Advancement Associate to develop and expand fundraising for the nonprofit and our charter school. The Senior Grants Officer is responsible for soliciting and monitoring grants and report submissions. The Chief Executive Officer and Vice President of Advancement work with the Board of Directors to leverage connections in the philanthropic community of Los Angeles and beyond. Their annual development plan has a focus on major gifts, corporate and foundation grants, and individual giving strategies. Notwithstanding ongoing fundraising efforts, PUENTE Learning Center leadership will sustain the roles of Community Schools Coordinator, Data Management Specialist, Vice President of Advancement, Vice President of Programs, Community Services Coordinator, Volunteer Services Manager, and Vice President of Finance and Administration after community school funding ends either with an allocation from the organization's general funds or by focusing resources on priority components such as staff, college counseling, and scholarships.



Current and most recent funders in support of PUENTE Charter Elementary, family engagement, health and wellness initiatives, and programs, extended learning opportunities, and early childhood education include BCM Foundation, Blue Shield of California, California Community Foundation, Johnny Carson Foundation, Citi Foundation, The Carl & Roberta Deutsch Foundation, Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation, Dollar General Literacy Program, Dwight Stuart Youth Fund, William H. Hannon Foundation, LA84 Foundation, The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, The Riordan Foundation, The Rose Hills Foundation, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, Snell & Wilmer, UnidosUS, and USC Office of Civic Engagement.

Additional funding that our Advancement team will seek out to support the long-term sustainability of community school operations includes the following. The federal Full-Service Community Schools program is operated by the U.S. Department of Education and funds services and support identical to those supported by CCSPP. Other U.S. Department of Education funding includes School Climate Transformation funding (last awarded by the federal government in 2019) which provides strong support for social-emotional learning (SEL), including resources such as PBIS. Additional U.S. Department of Education funding to review for sustainability will include the Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant Program and the School-Based Mental Health Services Grant Program for mental health resources with very strong alignment to the mental health resources in the community school model. LCFF funding discussed above can be used to target services for high-need students, including English Learners, low-income students, and foster youth. Other federal funding can include Title I, Part A and Title IV, Part A (schoolwide or targeted programs).

Additional sustainability funding for consideration will include State of California Universal Prekindergarten funds for LEAs, Medi-Cal funds available through the Billing Option program, and Schools Medi-Cal Administrative Activities Program (CA Department of Health Care Services). These programs reimburse LEAs for direct and administrative services and provide essential community school supports. The California Universal Meals Program provides funding for school meals for low-income students and families, while the Educator Effectiveness Block Grant supports professional development for teachers and other educators in public schools. The Community Engagement Initiative supports the capacity of LEAs to maintain school and community partnerships.

## Strategy 5: Strategic Community Partnerships

Developing strategic community partnerships allows schools and LEAs to build a stronger network of support and culturally responsive programming and resources for students, educators and families, and to foster a more inclusive, democratic and supportive learning environment that benefits everyone in the community.

In alignment with strategies developed in response to the deep needs and asset assessment, schools identify and establish school-community partnerships who share a holistic focus on students, families and the community. This section should demonstrate your goals and action steps to ensure community partners are actively involved in the planning, development, and continuous improvement of the community school.

## Site Level Goals and Measures of Progress

Goals	Action Steps
Increase partnerships with finalized MOUs to expand Integrated Support Services, increase family engagement, and assist with learning recovery strategies each year of implementation.	At least two new partner MOUs finalized annually by July of each implementation year, with an initial focus in Year 1 on partnerships around health and wellness, food security, and after-school and summer programming.
Consistently high engagement of community school partners as measured through communication participation benchmarks discussed at right	<p>Develop and implement regular communication methods with students and families, school staff, and community partners that include increased use of email newsletters (monthly), text messaging (daily to weekly), and social media posts (weekly to monthly).</p> <p>Increase membership of the Community School Advisory Committee by two community partners each year.</p> <p>Regular attendance at or above 75% at the Committee meetings established during Year 1 for community partners.</p>

Describe the partnerships you have established or plan to establish, and how your school's partnerships will be responsive to the vision and priorities of students, staff, families and community members:

PUENTE Charter School established partnerships that will continue during implementation:

- **Extended learning time and opportunities:**
  - *Think Together* (regular school year 2:30 to 6 pm), summer schedule (12:30 to 5 pm).
  - *College Corps* (CSULA and ELAC) college students serve as paid interns and are placed at PUENTE Charter to serve a 12-month period, 15 hours/week, for a total of 450 hours. They serve as mentors and tutors, paired with students who need extra academic support (based on testing and grade-level proficiency).
  - *LAPD Hollenbeck PAL* provides physical education during the regular school year and summer camp.
  - *Neighborhood Music School* provides performing arts during regular school and summer schedules.
  - *Theatre of Hearts/Youth First* provides performing arts during the regular school year.
  - *Common Threads* provides health and nutrition classes during the summer schedule.
  - *Reading is Fundamental Southern CA* provides free book giveaways during the regular school year.
- **Integrated Student Supports:**

- *Comprehensive Therapy Associates Inc.* provides mental and behavioral health support.
- *Vision to Learn* provides free eye exams and eyewear.
- *Care Solace* is a new health partner addressing more high-needs mental services for students and families.
- *UCLA Stein Eye Institute* provides free eye exams to TK/K students only.
- *Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC* provides free oral healthcare workshops, dental exams, and fluoride varnish.
- *White Memorial Community Health Center* provides free health screenings and health workshops.
- *Blue Shield of CA* provides health workshops and financial support for Community Unity garden and nutrition classes.
- *MADRES Center for Environmental Health Disparities at USC* provides health workshops.
- *LA Food Bank and Food Finders* provide free food boxes.
- *PUENTE Learning Center's Preschool program* is a state-licensed child-care provider for children ages 3 to 5.
- *PUENTE Learning Center's College and Career Program* provides college readiness workshops for parents and students.
- *PUENTE Learning Center's Adult Programs* partner with Los Angeles City College and LAUSD Adult Education to provide adult education programs such as ESL, high school diploma/certificate, workforce readiness classes, and citizenship.
- *UnidosUS* provides financial resources in support of oral and mental health and parent engagement curriculum called *Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors*.
- Two LA County Departments, the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Public Health, provide health resources and workshops.

PUENTE Charter School is in the process of completing Planning services and is seeking to expand our community partnerships in light of the Needs Analysis and Asset Mapping completed by our community school team. Our CSC to be hired will be a liaison between parents and students with community partners providing needed services at our school. Our school parents and students will join regular quarterly Community School Committee meetings to review needs based on the Needs Analysis updated each year and recommend partnerships with community agencies defined in the updated Assets Map. This will be facilitated by the CSC, who will coordinate meetings and finalize MOUs with agencies for services each implementation year.

Current partnerships to be expanded based on needs and community assets include free food distribution partners, dental care partners, healthy nutrition classes partners, legal partners to provide essential and no-cost legal advice on issues like immigration and housing, afterschool (expanded academic and assessment services to provide a true nine-hour school day) and summer program provider partners.

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