



A. Significance.

(i) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

The purpose of this proposal is to build upon promising practices for the Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) to improve school climate, behavioral supports and correctional education. SAUSD is the largest school district in Orange County and 7th largest in California. The K – 12 district is comprised of 54 schools, serving over 53,000 students, and ranks 2nd in the state for student population density. The National Free and Reduced Lunch Program is the best available indicator of children living in poverty or among working poor families. Within SAUSD, 91% of students qualify for the program. SAUSD has 82% of its students categorized as English Learners (EL), making it the number one port of entry for new EL students in the country.

Santa Ana is the most populous city in the county, and the 8th most densely populated city in the United States. Second and third generation families live under the same roof, many of whom live in converted garages or rooms not meant for human occupancy. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designated four Santa Ana residential areas as Empowerment Zones, or in severe and immediate need for intervention in the areas of economic development, health care, housing, childcare, and transportation. Criteria are consistent with President Obama’s current Promise Zone criteria. The city of Santa Ana was also recently recognized as a Promise Zone. The Los Angeles Times ranked Santa Ana as number one in the nation for “urban hardship” and “the nation’s toughest place to survive”. In Santa Ana, families often work multiple minimum wage paying jobs with long hours, yet lack the finances to provide essentials, such as consistent shelter, food, and clothing for the family.



SAUSD is dedicated to improving every student's academic and behavior outcome by ensuring all students have access to instructional, behavioral, and evidence-based intervention practices.

For the past four years, SAUSD has focused on building positive school culture and climate in its schools. The district has acknowledged the value of the school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework in developing these goals. SAUSD is one of the only districts in California, and the only district of its size that has implemented PBIS district-wide. This initiative began in 2008 when seven schools received support from the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) for PBIS training and implementation. After the positive results associated with PBIS, the SAUSD School Board approved a district-wide PBIS implementation plan. In 2013-2014, the final cohort of schools began training and implementing a school-wide PBIS system. Currently, all 54 schools continue to participate in training based on their differing levels of implementation.

SAUSD has also taken an active role in monitoring attendance, suspension, and expulsion data. In 2014-2015, SAUSD initiated a Restorative Practices and culturally relevant social emotional learning curriculum pilot at 5 schools to address Tier 2 and 3 behaviors. In 2015-2016, the School Climate Committee - consisting of community partners, students, parents and SAUSD administration, along with the Board of Education - led the expansion of Restorative Practices (RP) to 11 secondary school sites. Through restorative practices within the PBIS framework coupled with alternatives to violence prevention, such as Joven Noble and Xinachtli, which allowed SAUSD to provide culturally responsive strategies to support challenging Tier 2 and 3 youth behaviors.



RP provided an alternative to punitive practices that were deemed ineffective in redirecting student behavior. RP increased school safety by building trusting and engaging relationships with youth. Research shows that creating a positive relationship with our youth, leads to higher levels of student engagement, attendance, and academic achievement. These strategies assist in preventing lost instructional time due to exclusionary practices. RP has provided an alternative to suspensions and expulsions and an opportunity for correcting a student's behavior with meaningful interventions. Tiered violence prevention, intervention strategies and social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, such as Joven Noble and Xinachtli provide leadership development that supports and guides youth through their "rites of passage" while focusing on the prevention of substance abuse, teen pregnancy, relationship violence, gang violence and school failure, all of which plague urban schools in poverty.

In 2015-2016, SAUSD offered 15 full and 45 partial day PBIS trainings (e.g. social skills trainings, PBIS data systems, behavioral interventions) to over 800 participants (administrators, general and special education teachers, school psychologists, after-school providers, paraprofessionals, playground supervisors, and classified staff). Site visits were conducted by the District PBIS Leadership Team (DPLT) to support the development of behavior matrices, School PBIS Leadership Teams (SPLT), effective office discipline referrals, and coaching strategies for students exhibiting problematic behavior, which would otherwise be referred for suspension and expulsion prior to PBIS implementation. Administrative School Site Teams are utilizing district created alternatives to suspension and discretion with permissive expulsions. These options afford greater opportunity to reteach expected behavior and address the underlying issues of problematic behavior manifested by the students. PBIS is a framework for assisting schools in



adopting and organizing evidence based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavioral outcomes. Since SAUSD implemented PBIS and support programs such as Restorative Practices, SAUSD has recovered over 10,254 days of instruction (per academic year as compared to 2011-2012 baseline) through suspensions and expulsions reductions (See Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1: *Number of suspensions by year and school level*

SUSPENSIONS	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	% change
Elementary	854	551	489	336	306	-75%
Intermediate	2388	1879	1844	1256	1225	-62%
High School	4364	2040	1547	1450	822	-85%
Total Suspensions	7606	4470	3880	3,042	2,353	-69%
Days of Lost Instruction	15,261	9,118	7,371	6,382	5,007	-67% or 10,254 days

Table 2: *Number of expulsions by year and school level*

EXPULSIONS	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	% change
Elementary	0	0	1	2	1	79%
Intermediate	60	41	25	16	16	
High School	67	45	33	16	10	



SAUSD’s attendance rate has been over 92% since the 2010-2011 school year. Over the past 5 years, the attendance rates of 85% of our schools has increased, culminating in an increased District average for the 2015-2016 school year of 96.9%. (See Table 3 for 2015-16 school year baseline data)

Table 3: Attendance rates by school level for the 2015-16 school year.

	Elementary %	Intermediate %	High School %	Continuation Ed %
School Year 2015-16	97.46	97.50	96.29	91.95

(ii) Importance or magnitude of results or outcomes likely to be attained by the project.

The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion states that “Left untreated, mental health disorders in children and youth lead to higher rates of suicide, violence, school dropout, family dysfunction, juvenile incarcerations, alcohol and other drug use, and unintentional injuries”. “Schools play a vital role in creating safe, nurturing environments and providing care to students with emotional or behavioral problems”. Yet students are typically identified, sent to the Principal for discipline, and no real solution to the root cause is achieved.

During a needs assessment conducted with SAUSD schools, principals indicated that they spend 10-20 hours a week with office discipline referrals, limiting the time they have available to be present on the playground, in the classroom, or providing support to teachers. Student achievement is often hindered by excessive time spent out of class. Past ineffective practices including zero-tolerance policies, in-school and out of school suspensions for disruptive or defiant behavior take away valuable instructional time from students and create a punitive rather than restorative culture within the schools. SAUSD conducted a careful review of the gaps in services



available to students and their families in order to provide a comprehensive multi-tiered system of support. Assessments identified a need for more Tier 2 and Tier 3 level support. Other gaps and weaknesses in current services include: 1) training and coaching for administrators and teachers working with high need students and 2) few referral resources for students with more complex needs.

Data continues to play an integral role in continuously monitoring our interventions. The SAUSD Director of School Climate provides monthly data on suspensions and expulsions, disaggregated by prevention level, school, offense, date, days of instruction lost, and individual student data. Sites hold monthly data dialogues to analyze data trends and address issues. SAUSD's success with the PBIS framework still has not overcome all service gaps for Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels. Tier 2 targets students who are at-risk for engaging in more serious problem behaviors, but for whom high intensity interventions are not essential. Tier 3 is utilized for students who exhibit chronic behaviors and have more than six discipline referrals per year. Students with Tier 3 needs tend to progress along the disciplinary continuum since targeted interventions at the school site have not been available.

(iii) Likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

Schools cannot afford to utilize the traditional "waiting to fail model" to see if a student will correct their behavior. SAUSD aims to improve student-adult relationships, create social skill programs, and provide students the structure they need to meet the challenging curriculum and expectations. SAUSD's proposed Positive School Climate Model, will support student achievement by providing the resources necessary to expand capacity to work with high-risk students to foster restorative practice skills and growth mindset. As part of the Positive School



Climate Model, key site staff will provide necessary support for students who display problematic behaviors along with several underlying issues from mental health, lack of health, gang involvement, abuse and homelessness.

Even with the many current services being provided, SAUSD recognizes the need to reach more students. To expand support and build the capacity of schools, SAUSD proposes to hire key personnel to support school level reform and provide training to key site level staff on meeting the needs of students requiring Tier 2 (targeted 10-15% of the student population) and Tier 3 (highest need, 5%) interventions. To support student learning, restorative practices and violence prevention and intervention must be integrated in a comprehensive plan that focuses on providing a safe and secure school environment where every student feels positively connected and engaged with their school community of students and staff. The district proposes to:

- provide a behavior certification training for assistant principals and teachers on special assignment on targeted Tier 3 interventions and de-escalation strategies
- coordinate restorative practices supporting mental health/gang prevention/anti-bullying programs for all targeted school sites
- provide a behavior coach program on classroom management strategies
- implement Social Emotional Learning (SEL) groups, Joven Noble, Xinachitl
- host quarterly meetings with SPLTs to discuss data trends and behavior challenges
- develop a re-entry program for probation students to reduce recidivism using restorative practice
- create an alternative to first time violence, harassment or bullying type of offenses in lieu of suspension and expulsion using restorative practice strategies



- create a Parent School Climate Institute for parents to receive restorative practice and PBIS training

SAUSD is proposing several essential enhancements to its current School Climate model which will include PBIS and RP components. The Administrator (in-kind) and Project Director will lead the training and recruitment for the Parent School Climate Institute and ensure that overall implementation is efficient and effective. (More details in Appendix F, *Resume of Key Personnel_job summary p.25-34*) One School Climate Program Specialist will be hired and assigned to serve as a key member of the DPLT; and will be responsible for facilitating trainings on PBIS tools, School-wide Information Systems (SWIS), Check-in Check-out (CICO), and other behavioral interventions; coach school sites on Tier 2 and 3 interventions, behavior support plans; conduct site level Data Dialogues; connect community resources to school sites; and develop new systems reinforcing school climate and building capacity. The current successful pilot which has proven successful will be expanded to more sites, with full time RP staff in order to reduce escalation of problematic behavior and to increase alternatives to suspension. RP Intervention Specialists with RP and PBIS expertise, will be hired to provide tiered RP strategies. In addition, five School Climate Community Liaisons (CL) will assist the School Climate Specialist. Twenty-seven sites (a mix of elementary, intermediate, and high school) of 54 total district sites will be randomly assigned to receive assistance from a CL for the first two years of the grant. The remaining school sites will receive CL support during year 3 of the grant. These CLs will serve as a key member of the PBIS Site Team, facilitate trainings on PBIS and RP to parents and facilitate circles and conferences with students, staff and parents. They will assist with providing community based resources, monitoring attendance, conducting home visitations and co-



facilitating RP circles. Schools are each assessed with the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) which gives a score on percentage of each tier implemented at a school site. TFI scores will help to individualize the assistance that each site needs. Schools may be experiencing challenges during initial implementation or schools may be in need of reviewing foundational skills or addressing emerging behavior trends.

The proposed Positive School Climate Model will meet the priority of building upon the promising practice of a multi-tiered behavioral framework and expansion of restorative practices to improve school climate. This district-wide PBIS approach along with emphasis on Restorative Practice strategies promote positive school connectedness through universal supports, as well as more intensive targeted interventions, home visits, case management, and increased involvement with students involved in challenging behaviors reducing suspension, expulsion and ultimately involvement with the juvenile justice system. Restorative Practices will not be considered an add-on program, instead it will integrate into all facets of school structures which ultimately lead to increased and sustained positive school climate.

B. Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan.

(i) Goals, objectives, and outcomes.

In order to continuously improve and advance schools through the implementation continuum, SAUSD will use the TFI to identify areas of need to improve PBIS implementation, including identifying schools that would benefit from revisiting foundational training or addressing emerging behavioral trends. Targeted schools that score below 80% on the TFI for Tier 1 will be targeted for capacity building with coaches. A grant funded School Climate



Specialist, with expertise in PBIS strategies and Restorative Practices, PBIS assessments, planning of multi-tiered interventions, and staff coaching, will work closely with the Liaisons to determine the needs of each site. All credentialed and classified staff complete the Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) in the beginning of each school year to report individual's perception of implementation and improvement priorities for school-wide, classroom, non-classroom, and individual student systems which supports the implementation and fidelity of PBIS. SAS results serve as an effective tool in identifying staff priorities for action planning and creating school-wide goals. SAUSD utilizes the TFI in multiple ways to measure the fidelity of PBIS implementation and to assist in action planning. Sites will be assessed with the TFI by a district PBIS member in conjunction with the site team annually in Spring in order to assess and evaluate the critical features of PBIS at each tier. Data is gathered and analyzed to determine annual goals, evaluate on-going efforts, design and revise procedures, and compare year-to-year efforts. Targeted tiers will be progress monitored two times throughout the year (September and February) to determine on-going need and assistance. The Specialist will utilize SAS and TFI progress assessments conducted throughout the year, quarterly data reports, and final TFI scores to customize training and design targeted coaching for the specific needs of each school.



Table 4 displays the logic model inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes for the Positive School Climate Model:

Table 4: SAUSD’s Positive School Climate Logic Model			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<p><i>Existing District Inputs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBIS personnel and resources • Organizational Support • Director, SchoolClimate • Parents • Community Forum (School Climate Com.) • Internal expertise in school climate & data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a Project Director, Program Specialist, Community Liaisons • Data Dialogues with SPLCs • Provide trainings to CLs, RP, counselors, school psychologists, teachers, administrators, SPLC and parents on PBIS and RP tools and behavioral interventions • Parent School Climate Institute development and recruitment • Provide training to SPLCs, CLs on (SWIS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of trainings & staff trained on SWIS • TFI Assessment • # of trainings & staff trained on PBIS tools and/or behavioral interventions • PBIS fidelity logs and RP logs • # of staff receiving coaching • # of students participating in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase teacher/ staff knowledge, skills, & practice of PBIS, RP, and behavioral interventions • Continued use of best practices • Increase in students’ social emotional skills (i.e. growth mindset, self-efficacy, social awareness)



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Research and Evaluation team • Program Specialist, RP and PBIS • PBIS Lead trainer <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Key Partners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Community partners/resources • California Endowment • WestEd partnership • Orange County DOE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the use of SWIS • Provide coaching to school sites on Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions • Assist CLs with resource mapping to meet student/family needs • Train SPLCs on data collection methods for fidelity of model • Nurture relationships with community partners 	<p>Tier 2 and 3 services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of juvenile justice youth served • case management data (e.g. home visits, linkages to community resources) • # of parents trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce ODRs in students receiving Tier 2 services • Greater SEL in students receiving Tier 2 services • Decrease in ODR for behavior problems • Increase parent awareness of PBIS and RP strategies to improve student behavior and engagement
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SAUSD will track progress toward the following program objectives each year of the grant:

Program Objective 1: *Schools who received below an 70% TFI score will increase their score to at least 85% implementation fidelity by the end of the same school year.* The TFI is conducted



at the end of each school year by a District PBIS team member along with the school site team to measure PBIS implementation fidelity. TFI results will monitor progress towards Program Objective 1 with 2015-2016 school year TFI scores utilized as baseline data.

Table 5: Documents used for the analysis of implementation	
Artifacts Data Videos Curriculum Tiered- Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline Handbook with description of Minors and Majors • Annual Action Plan for meeting school wide behavior support goals • Lesson plans and implementation time line (copies of assemblies, stations, when expectations were taught) • Behavioral incident summaries or reports (e.g. Office referrals, suspensions, expulsions, AERIES reports, School Wide Information Systems (SWIS) reports, etc.) • Office Discipline Referral (ODR) form • RP logs of services provided • PBIS matrix of expectations by school • PBIS implementation fidelity reports (TFI, SAS) • California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) • CORE: California Office of Reforming Educations SEL/Climate data

Program Objective 2: *Schools participating in Restorative Practice Interventions will reduce suspensions by 50%.* Significant progress toward Program Objective 2 will be made as students participate in Restorative Practice tiered interventions which will lead to a decrease in recidivism



and suspensions. Data will be collected through AERIES query reports disaggregated by student, type of offense, and frequency of offense. In order to reduce suspensions by a large amount, it is important to provide all students with a Tier 1 proactive approach which is based on strong, positive student and staff relationships by utilizing Restorative Practice strategies, such as building community through agreed, open discussions on various issues. Students will have opportunities to speak freely without feeling judged and will be empowered to support one another through authentic dialogue resulting in greater school safety and connectedness and promoting social emotional skills development.

Students who need additional support will be referred to Tier 2 interventions, where students can speak to a CL either in private or in a small group with other students having similar challenges. By utilizing these Tier 2 interventions effectively, students would be given the opportunity to reflect on issues that are daily stressors. The School Climate Specialist and Community Liaisons are responsible for the delivery of these interventions that will be used with the best intentions to assist students through their stressors, not shame them on their actions.

Tier 3 interventions will be provided to students who have not positively responded to Tier 1 and 2 interventions. These identified students will be offered to partake in a Restorative Conference along with continuous check-in with an identified staff member. Students will not be suspended if they were provided the opportunity to participate in these tiered approaches. However, there are non-negotiables in which students can violate Education Code 48900.5. The intent of SAUSD is to provide these structured tiered interventions to help improve the school climate at each school which will eventually result in a decline in office referrals, suspensions and expulsions.



Program Objective 3: *The overall attendance rate will improve .5% by school level.* AERIES attendance data will be used to identify and track individual and student groups disconnected from school. Targeted intervention will be provided to reconnect and support relationship building.

Program Objective 4: *Office referrals will be reduced by 25%.*

SAUSD will establish baseline data from the School Wide Information System (SWIS) office discipline referral system which can be used for school specific and districtwide data. This system is aligned with the overall student database AERIES, which, generates suspension, academic and attendance reports. The Evaluator will conduct AERIES queries that will disaggregate data related to attendance, office disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and expulsions.

(ii) Adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives on time and within budget.

The proposed program will benefit from the expertise of an Administrator, Project Director (PD), SC Program Specialist, 5 CLs, Evaluator and a Senior Administrative Assistant.

- The Administrator (**SAUSD Director of School Climate – (.2 FTE as in-kind)**) will provide overall guidance and support to the overall program design. She will ensure that the program is administered and conducted within budget, and timelines and milestones are achieved. She will be responsible for identifying strategies to sustain program services beyond the grant and ensure systematic integration of restorative practices at school sites. **Sonia Llamas, Ed.D., L.C.S.W., will serve as Project Director (see resume in appendices) until staff is hired.** She has over 20 years of experience with high-risk youth, prevention and intervention programming, school reform, school climate, data evaluation and grant management.



- The **Project Director (1 FTE)** will oversee implementation and ongoing program operation; monitor grant spending; oversee the evaluation process; and work closely with program staff to ensure the program is implemented with fidelity as outlined in this proposal. The Project Director will also meet with principals to ensure quality programming and to ensure consistent communication between target schools, program staff, and stakeholders. (Appendix F, p. 25-34 for the following three job descriptions). The candidate has not yet been selected for this position
- The **School Climate (SC) Program Specialist (1 FTE)** will provide the following site level support for each target school: intensive coaching with SPLTs, conduct trainings and data dialogues, and develop action plans. The SC Program Specialist will be a key member of the DPLT. The SC Program Specialist will be certified as a facilitator for PBIS assessments, including SWIS and CICO; have knowledge regarding the multi-tiers of PBIS and effective interventions and supports at each level; and be able to interpret data to assist schools in developing action plans for modifications to their school's PBIS system of interventions. The candidate has not yet been selected for this position.
- The **SC Community Liaisons (5 FTE)** will support the Program Specialist and will: act as a liaison between the school, home and community agencies; provide individual/group assistance to students in need of Tier 2 and 3 strategies; assist sites with necessary school adjustments, attendance and child welfare issues; plan, develop, and implement informational and educational programs for students, teachers, parents and families on School Climate topics; serve on PBIS Site Team; facilitate circles and conferences with students, staff and parents; co-facilitate classroom circles to support teachers in improving class climate; provide community based



resources, monitor attendance, conduct home visitations and provide outreach services to the community, parents, and staff. The candidates have not yet been selected for this position

- The **Evaluation Team (WestEd)** will monitor data collection and produce monthly, quarterly, and annual evaluation reports on progress toward program objectives and grant requirements. The Evaluator will meet monthly with the SC Program Specialist and Project Director to prepare “data dialogues” for each target school covering disciplinary outcomes, ideas for modification, and strategies for targeted interventions. Data summaries will be used by the SC Program Specialist and SPLT to identify action plans for modifications. WestEd will serve as Evaluator (see *Resumes* for WestEd team in Appendices F, p. 9-24 and Appendix J, p.4 *Scope of Work*). Collectively, the WestEd evaluation team encompasses over 50 years of experience in research and evaluation.

Table 6 delineates the Positive School Climate Model Timeline of responsibilities, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Table 6: SAUSD Positive School Climate Model Timeline		
Task	Person Responsible	Milestone
Hire Project Director (PD)	SAUSD Director of School Climate	PD and Program Evaluator (PE) begin work (Month 1)
Hire School Climate Program Specialist (PS) and Climate Community Liaisons (CL)	PD	PS and CLs begin work (Month 1-3)
PD and PE structure evaluation tasks	PD and PE	Develop evaluation plan, protocols, and procedures (Month 1-3)
Schools are randomized	PD and PE	PE randomly assign sites (Month 1)



Develop Training/Coaching Plan	PD and PS	PS develops coaching/training plan (Month 2-4)
CL training on RP and community resources; targeted school assignment	PD and PS	PD will ensure timely hiring and current RP Program Specialist will train CLs in RP strategies
Meetings scheduled with each target school	PD, PS, SPLT, and CLs	Coaching/Training plan finalized (Month 3-6)
Target schools attend PBIS/RP training for professional learning community interaction	PD, PS, SPLT	SPLT learn from peers 3 times per year (Month 6, 9, 12)
Create and disseminate social marketing campaign	School Climate Committee (SCC), Partners, PD	PD will work with SCC to ensure community is aware of project within District (Month 6)
Parent School Climate Institute	Project Director	Provide PD to CLs and School Based Teams to establish District-wide Parent Institute (Month 6-9)
Target schools complete first TFI	SPLT	Baseline set for school year (Month 6). Process repeated in (Month 9 and 12) each year
PD and PS conducts data dialogue with each target school	PD, PS, SPLT, and CLs	Action plans developed (Month 8) and modified in (Month 12) each year
Target schools complete TFI assessments (fidelity check)	District PBIS Team with CLs,	Fall, Winter and Spring of each year



Conduct fidelity assessments	PS, CLs, PE	Monthly checklists and compilation
Progress Report is completed to US Department of Education	PE, PD with support from PS	Year 1 complete (Month 12, 24)
Final Report Submitted to US Department of Education	PE, PD with support from PS	Program is completed (Year 3)

(iii) Feedback and Continuous Improvement.

To ensure feedback and continuous improvement, information regarding the grant will be aggregated and presented to different stakeholder groups throughout the grant implementation process. Planned data collection will assess implementation fidelity and identify barriers and facilitators to scaling up the intervention. Data for the implementation study will be mostly based on surveys, focus groups, interviews, and observations. Quantitative and qualitative data will be reported to the implementation team on an on-going basis to provide performance feedback and permit assessment of progress in meeting programmatic goals. For qualitative interview and focus group data, brief formative memos will be provided to the implementation team. In-depth descriptions of implementation successes and challenges will be documented and common themes will be distilled, triangulated, and summarized in an overarching report at the mid-point and final year of the project. A critical aim of the formative evaluation is to document the key elements of implementation to facilitate replication in other settings. School Climate Committee consisting of community and parent groups will be utilized to garner additional feedback and identify areas needing improvement.



(iv) Information Dissemination.

The Positive School Climate Model Grant purpose, events, program components, and accomplishments will be shared via a project newsletter, informational meetings for principals, teachers, community groups, parents and and the School Climate Committee. Positive School Climate Model Grant will also be shared using technology such as posting on SAUSD’s social media platforms on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in order to reach a diverse audience of educators, students, and other education organizations. Parents and the community will also have updates via access to the District’s Peach Jar electronic messaging service to send messages directly to parents via text, automated phone, and email messages. These sources will be leveraged to build awareness and provide access to the Positive School Climate Model Grant resources. Santa Ana will also share Positive School Climate events and messaging through the District’s Channel 31, a 24-hour TV channel that provides district news, public information, and educational programming.

Our private sector partner, The California Endowment will be supporting with infographic flyers for information dissemination regionally, at the state level and nationally, on outcomes and media/videos in relation to progress on the grant. The Positive School Climate Model Grant implementation team will provide updates to the SAUSD School Board, which, are streamed on Channel 31. In addition, presentations will be made to parent and community groups at our District’s Annual Parent Conference and the Community School Choice Fair. Lastly, findings and outcomes will be presented at national/international conferences related to School Climate. Information will be accessible on our District website in English and Spanish.



C. Quality of Project Evaluation.

Partners: WestEd’s Health and Human Development Program (HHDP) will be responsible for the evaluation of the Positive School Climate Model. WestEd is a preeminent educational research, development, and service organization with over 650 research, technical, administrative, and clerical personnel. HHDP’s wide-ranging and diverse expertise includes a deep understanding of school climate and culture, social emotional learning, implementation science, program evaluation in schools, research methodology, and quantitative and qualitative analytic methods. The proposed WestEd staff bring extensive experience in large-scale random assignment studies conducted in school settings. In Appendix J, p.1-2, *Qualification of Personnel*, a breakdown of 4- key evaluation personnel from WestEd and their specific roles in relation to their ability to carry out the evaluation effectively.

(i) Rigorous Independent Evaluation.

WestEd will conduct a rigorous, third party, random assignment evaluation of the Positive School Climate Model. The study will seek to obtain reliable evidence of impact on reductions in office discipline referrals, perceptions of school climate (student-staff relationships, student voice opportunities, school safety, school connectedness), and social- emotional skills (growth mindset, self-efficacy, self-management, social awareness). Impacts will be investigated for all grade 5 students in participating elementary schools, all grade 6-8 students in middle schools, and all grade 9-12 students in high schools, as well as for students eligible to receive Tier 2 supports at each of these types of schools. Although impacts will be estimated in middle and high schools, only in elementary schools is the sample size sufficient to estimate reliable impacts. The evaluation will estimate program impacts on possible mediating factors, such as teacher



perceptions of behavior expectations, implementation of restorative practices, and teacher perceptions of their classroom climate.

Research Questions: Six overarching research questions will guide the evaluation:

1. Do students in schools assigned to receive support from school climate specialists and community liaisons exhibit lower rates of office discipline referrals for behavior problems?
2. Do students in schools assigned to receive support from school climate specialists and community liaisons report more positive relationships with school staff, more student voice opportunities, greater school safety, and greater school connectedness?
3. Do students in schools assigned to receive support from school climate specialists and community liaisons exhibit greater social emotional skills, such as higher levels of growth mindset, self-efficacy, self-management, and social awareness?
4. Do students in schools referred to receive Tier 2 services in schools assigned to receive support from school climate specialists and community liaisons exhibit lower rates of office discipline referrals and greater levels of social emotional skills?
5. Do teachers in schools assigned to receive support from school climate specialists and community liaisons report higher and more consistent student behavior expectations, greater frequency of restorative practice implementation, and higher perceptions of their positive classroom climate?
6. How do moderating student characteristics affect program impacts?

We propose to obtain evidence regarding program effectiveness using a randomized controlled trial. This trial will be accompanied by an implementation study to provide formative



feedback to inform the analysis of program impacts, to improve the program and its implementation, and to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

(ii) Impact Evaluation.

A cluster-randomized, experimental design will be used to answer the research questions (Table J1, Appendix J p.5-6). Schools will be randomly assigned to one of two different groups—a treatment group and a wait-listed control group—with 18 elementary-, 5 middle-, and 4 high schools per group. Randomization will be stratified by school type (elementary, middle, and high schools) and impacts will be examined separately for each school type. Key student outcomes include measures of (a) office discipline referrals, (b) relationship bonds between students and teachers, (c) student voice opportunities, (d) school safety, (e) school connectedness, (f) growth mindset, (g) self-efficacy, (h) self-management, and (i) social awareness. Impacts on student outcomes will be assessed for all students in participating schools. In addition, impacts on social emotional skills will be estimated for students referred for Tier 2 supports. Note that estimated impacts on students eligible for Tier 2 supports may be biased to the extent that the funded services influence the composition of students referred for Tier 2 services. Impacts will be estimated after the first and second year of implementation. Schools in the control condition will be wait-listed and not receive support from the school climate specialists or community liaisons until fall 2019.

Estimating Program Impacts: To preserve the integrity of random assignment and account for self-selection, outcome analyses will include *all randomly assigned schools*, whether or not they actually receive support from school climate specialists and community liaisons. Students and teachers that cross experimental conditions will be kept in their originally assigned groups for



analyses. The evaluation team will estimate program impacts by comparing student and teacher outcomes in schools assigned to the intervention group to the outcomes of their counterparts in schools assigned to the control group. The primary hypothesis-testing analyses will involve fitting conditional multilevel models (HLM). Covariates will include treatment group, baseline measures of outcome variables (when applicable), and other observed covariates (free/reduced-price lunch status, LEP, gender). Separate impacts will be estimated for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools, although the precision of the impact estimates will be adversely affected by the small number of middle and high schools in the district. Analyses will also examine differences in impacts across student subgroups. Further details about the analytic models are provided in Appendix J, p.10-11).

Sample size and minimum detectable effects (MDE): For statistical power estimation purposes, we conservatively assume that each participating elementary school will have 110 grade 5 students and 20 grade k-5 teachers. This yields an expected sample size of 3,960 students (36 schools X 110 students) for each elementary school cohort. We expect that 1,000 and 1,400 students per middle and high school, respectively, will provide outcome data, as will 50 and 100 teachers in middle and high schools. We also assume that 10 percent of students in each school will be referred to Tier 2 supports. Note that 10 middle and 8 high schools will participate in the Positive School Climate initiative.

Following the procedures described in Appendix J, p.11-12, we estimated the minimum detectable effect size (MDES) generated by the design. The MDES is the smallest true effect that the design can detect with 80 percent confidence. The calculations suggest that the study is powered to detect cohort-specific impacts of 0.21 and 0.28 standard deviation units for all Tier 1-



and Tier 2-eligible students, respectively, in elementary schools. Effect sizes of this level are typical in effective educational interventions and are of sufficient magnitude to close achievement gaps across subpopulation groups (Hill et al., 2008; Schochet, 2008). The equivalent MDES estimates are 0.51 (Tier 1) and 0.54 (Tier 2) for middle schools and 0.85 and 0.88 for high schools. Thus, the design is sufficiently powered to reliably detect impacts on student outcomes in elementary schools but likely insufficiently powered to reliably detect impacts in secondary schools.

(iii) Data sources and key measures.

The impact evaluation relies on three sources of outcome data: (1) routinely collected district and school archival discipline referral and attendance data; (2) tracked, social emotional skills surveys administered to all students in grades 5 to 12 each spring; (3) anonymous school climate surveys administered in the spring to all grade 5, 7, 9, and 11 students; (4) surveys administered to all staff each spring; and (5) interviews with twelve grade teachers from each school conducted in the first spring. (Appendix J, p. 6-10).

Formative Evaluation: In addition to the impact evaluation, WestEd will conduct an implementation evaluation study to provide formative feedback data to assess school progress in implementing the strategies. It will document the roll-out of Positive School Climate Model in participating schools, planned data collection will also assess implementation fidelity and identify barriers and facilitators to scaling up the intervention. Quantitative and qualitative data will be reported to the implementation team on an on-going basis to provide performance feedback and permit assessment of progress in meeting programmatic goals.