**Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023**

***Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School***

→ **Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups**

**Which student subgroups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?**

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) is committed to ensuring all of our students achieve success in school and after graduation. However, we recognize that not all student groups have experienced the same level of success to date. Based on a review of our data we have a growing population of high needs students, particularly entering in 6th grade, who are not experiencing the same level of MCAS outcomes and graduation rates as their peers. We also note some students within high-needs subgroups have lower engagement.

We are committing to intensive work to close achievement and opportunity gaps for these student subgroups and recognize that this important work will take not just the efforts of school staff, but also our families and community.

→ **Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

**What evidence-based programs will your charter school adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will you allocate to these programs?**

PVCICS has begun to adopt strategies that focus on meeting the needs of all of our student groups. Alongside several other improvement strategies, we intend to continue and deepen our work on two important initiatives already underway.

1. **Inclusion for students with disabilities (SWD).** PVCICS has recently needed to increase support staffing to meet the needs of our growing population of SWD in a least restrictive environment. Over the last three years our students with disabilities population has grown from 5.5% of 529 students to 10.7% of 560 students. We have invested in additional inclusion teachers and associated PD as part of a program to support the development of educators in delivering instruction in an inclusionary setting in PVCICS. This inclusion program has included a focus on instructional support and special education teachers for entering 6th graders, but support all high-needs students. Student Opportunity Act funding will be used to maintain and build upon the success of the program by adding staff and training.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Inclusion teachers | TBD | Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Employee Benefits / Fixed Charges |
| Inclusion PD | TBD | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities |
| **SOA program categories:** | | D (hiring school personnel) and E (PD) |

1. **Summer Learning Programs**. High-quality summer programs provide students additional opportunities to master grade level standards and accelerate their learning. Research has shown these programs to have positive outcomes for students who attend compared to their peers who do not attend.

Last summer PVCICS received $12,000.00 from the *FY2021 114-333 - Summer-Vacation Learning* grant to support summer programs geared to all grades and focused on the most vulnerable students needing special education services, English learner services, elementary Tier 3 Response to Intervention and middle/high at risk/credit recovery. The Tier 3 and at risk/credit recovery students were either academically behind prior to the spring 2020 Covid-19 mandated statewide school closure or fell behind during the closure. We also allowed elementary general education students, who were not in Tier 3 RTI intervention, to participate in the elementary summer program because some of them missed core instruction during the closure, as well as students who were at risk socially or emotionally. PVCICS will use Student Opportunity Act funding to maintain and build upon the success of the program conducted last summer.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Inclusion teachers | TBD | Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Employee Benefits / Fixed Charges |
| Inclusion PD | TBD | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities |
| **SOA program categories:** | | D (hiring school personnel) and E (PD) |

→ **Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

**What metrics will your charter school use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of Department metrics or provide your own.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Department outcome metrics:**    * Improved ELA mean SGP for all groups identified above    * Improved Mathematics mean SGP for all groups identified above | 1. **Custom district metrics:**    * Student engagement (measured by improvements in our annual district-wide student survey – questions related to engagement) |

→ **Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

**How will your charter school ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the charter school regarding their students’ needs?**

PVCICS recognizes that family engagement is critical to ensuring successful outcomes for all students. Given our focus on student subgroups, it is particularly important that we find ways to effectively engage our families of students of color, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, EL students and students with disabilities. To that end PVCICS has a recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UMass/Amherst Family Relationships, Affective Science, and Minority Health (FAM) Lab.

The UMass FAM lab research team will assist school leaders and the school counseling department within PVCICS in 1) the development and employment of a mentorship student learning model, 2) the creation of orientation assessments for new students and their parents, and 3) the evaluation of a new socioemotional intervention program. The mentorship student learning model will be co-constructed by PVCICS leadership and Dr. Mercado’s research team. While still in development, the model is likely to entail UMass graduate and undergraduate students serving as mentors to middle school and high school students at PVCICS. This model will entail instruction by mentors, and engagement of PVCICS students in research activities when deemed appropriate. In future iterations of this model and upon approval by UMass administrators, a service-learning course may be offered by Dr. Mercado at UMass/Amherst that will entail a small group of undergraduate students working closely with PVCICS staff and students to complete collaborative service projects.

The partnership with the FAM lab allows PVCICS to work collaboratively on surveying and analyzing student data for PVCICS students both at the school level and within high need subgroups within the school. As a regional charter school serving students from rural, suburban and urban communities, PVCICS’s students represent a wide range of student backgrounds and factors such as socio-economic, racial/ethnic, gender identity, and cultural/linguistic heritage are areas being researched to help improve the educational program at PVCICS for all students, especially those with highest needs.

**Certifications:**

* **By checking here, I certify that our district has engaged stakeholders in accordance with the SOA Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

PVCICS regularly engages with parents/guardians including Family Association representatives, educators, our special education parent advisory council, EL parents and all parents. Through parent surveys conducted a minimum of annually, PVCICS collects information on its educational program as well as how parents are feeling about the school. With the Covid-19 pandemic, PVCICS has surveyed parents more frequently to assess parent’s perspective on the pandemic. A primary concern for families was a desire for additional support for students who are not meeting academic expectations for their grade level.; a second was protecting the physical and mental health of the students and families.

* **By checking here, I certify that the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School’s Board of Trustees supported our Student Opportunity Plan**

**Date:** 1/7/2021 Board Meeting **Outcome:** Board Supported the Plan