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

***UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester***

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

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

The mission of UP Academy Dorchester is to ensure our students acquire the knowledge, skills, and strength of character necessary to succeed on the path to college and to achieve their full potential. However, we recognize not all student groups have experienced the same level of success to date. We see in our data that our students with disabilities, English learners, and Black and Latinx students have historically performed lower than their peers on MCAS. (Almost all our students are Black or Latinx, but we see a gap when comparing their scores to white students in Boston Public Schools.) We also see lower scores on student surveys on school and classroom climate for some of these subgroups. Additionally, our school staff does not mirror our student population.

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 be allocated to these programs?**

**Evidence-based program #1: Early Literacy Programs in Early Elementary Grades**

When we achieve this priority our scholars will feel empowered as readers and writers because they will see themselves in the texts they read. At the same time, they’ll adore reading because it allows them to embark on adventures to faraway places and learn about people and cultures different from their own. Scholars will be able to tackle any text that is put in front of them by using a variety of tools: decoding, comprehension, and vocabulary. In order to achieve this, UAD will implement the EL curriculum in the elementary grades, implement Fundations with integrity, focus on Guided Reading, and revamp social justice read aloud.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category[[1]](#footnote-1)** |
| EL curriculum materials | $20,000 | Instructional Materials |
| Fundations training | $5,000 | Professional Development |
| Staff? Assessment? |  |  |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades |
| **SOA program categories:** | | E (PD), F (Curriculum)) |

**Evidence-based program #2: Leadership Pipeline Development Programs**

UAB will partner with UP Education Network to participate in the UP Leadership Institute. The leadership institute has four programs: Model Teacher, Teacher Leader, Principal Fellow, and Principal in Residence. The leadership institute is a yearlong program that provides intensive training in proven best instructional and leadership practices that will lead to transforming our schools into exceptional learning environments. Programming includes professional development sessions, coaching, assignments and readings, and school visits. Additional programming will be provided to those transitioning into new roles in the following school year.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| UP Education Network Service Fee | 47,500 | Professional Development |
| Principal in Residence | 90,000 | Administration |
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| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Leadership Pipeline Development Programs |
| **SOA program categories:** | | 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.**

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| 1. **Department outcome metrics:**    * Increase MCAS percentile rank by 10 points and SGP of 55+ | **2) Custom metrics (must include targets as well):**   * + 20% more students reading on grade level than prior year (following the children) as measured by F&P   + Increase diversity of school leadership staff |

→ **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?**

UP Academy Dorchester recognizes the direct correlation of high levels of family engagement and student success. Given our focus on ensuring all student groups (low-income students, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities), have equal access to a high quality education, we find it imperative to ensure we have effective ways to engage families of all students.

In addition to the already established venues for us to engage with families, that might not reach all families, including family-staff events, parent-teacher report card conferences, annual family surveys, language line translation services, School Site Council meetings, PTO meetings, and required IEP meetings, the school is committing to adding other options for family engagement opportunities.

The school is committed to making bi-weekly phone calls to the families of all students to share updates, answer questions, and build relationships. This is being monitored and tracked in the schools student information system. Additionally, the school is increasing its frequency of family surveys to ensure input on initiatives and decisions is gathered at a higher rate. The school is ensuring a greater level of access to surveys by sharing surveys via additional venues - email, text, website, and through direct teacher outreach. Response rates to surveys will be measured via data collected through survey portals.

**Certifications:**

* **By checking here, I certify that our charter school has engaged stakeholders in our community in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act**

**Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

Engagement of stakeholders in decision making for the school community is paramount to our success both as a school and as an organization. School staff, students, families and community organizations all play a critical part in shaping the vision of our school, but also more day to day decision making, particularly in a crisis.

There are two clear examples on how all of these stakeholders are involved in shaping the experience of our school.

School level strategic planning is one process in which we thoughtfully engage our stakeholders. Each year, the school determines focus areas and strategies for improvement for the year to come. That process involves deep engagement with quantitative performance data, but also engagement with qualitative data with all of our stakeholders. Network level strategic planning is another method in which we engage stakeholders. Every 3-5 years, we do a deep dive into the performance of the network and each school and plan for the future. This is a massive exercise that requires deep engagement of stakeholders including staff, families and students. We attempt to leverage existing structures and meetings with our stakeholders, but also ramp up that engagement as needed to come to the best possible outcome. Below are examples of how that engagement happens.

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| **Stakeholder** | **Engagement Practice** |
| School Staff | * Weekly surveys * Semi-annual surveys (in more detail) * Focus groups * Cohort groups * Task force meetings (as needed with COVID response) |
| Students | * Semi-annual surveys * Focus groups * Student Council |
| Families | * Semi-annual surveys * Focus groups * Parent Advisory Council * One on one meetings |
| Community members | * Meetings with State Representatives * Meetings with State Senators * Meetings with City Council members * Task force meetings (as needed with COVID response) |

* **By checking here, I certify that the UP Academy Dorchester Board of Trustees voted on our Student Opportunity Act Plan.**

**Date of vote: 1/27/2021 Outcome of vote: Approved**

1. The foundation categories are: Administration; Instructional Leadership; Classroom & Specialist Teachers; Other Teaching Services; Professional Development; Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology; Guidance and Psychological; Pupil Services; Operations and Maintenance; Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges; and Special Education Tuition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)