

FY2021 Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant Report

Organization Name:	Children First/Communities in Schools		
Project Name:	Student Support Specialists Attendance, Behavior, Coursework + Parent Engagement Improvement		
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)		Quarter 1 (July 1, 2020 - September 30, 2020)	
		Quarter 2 (October 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020)	
		Quarter 3 (January 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021)	
	X	Quarter 4 (April 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021)	

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Overall project updates:	<p>Students returned to the school building for in-person instruction in March 2021, and our afterschool enrichment programming resumed regular hours from 2:30-5pm Monday-Thursday in the Woodridge and Pisgah View apartment communities. This summer, students are attending summer school with Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools Monday through Thursday. As an incentive for our case-managed students to attend, we are offering "Fun Fridays" for students to participate in outdoor activities like swimming, hiking, zip-lining, and more. While we typically hold a six-week summer camp that takes place four days a week, we determined it was best to collaborate with the school systems in ensuring students receive the academic support they need to stay on track in school. We are also working with our students who were unable to get a spot in the Asheville City Schools summer school session. Those students work with their Student Support Specialist at our Pisgah View Learning Center from 9am to 12pm, three days per week. Student Support Specialists provided multiple Tier 1 services to local students this school year, including food distribution, school supply distribution, Spanish translation services, Emergency Financial Assistance, and resource sharing. Tier 2 and 3 small group and individual services include tutoring, mentoring, social-emotional learning groups, and behavioral intervention/modification. In coordinating services, Student Support Specialists have been in close (weekly) contact with the parents of students, and play a key role in supporting families in need of resources and connection. In the 2020-2021 school year, 93% of our 134 case-managed students made progress toward or met their Attendance, Behavioral, or Coursework goals, and 100% of them were promoted to the next grade.</p>
COVID-19 impacts:	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the challenges facing those we serve, creating an even stronger need in our community for social-emotional, academic, and basic needs assistance to ensure these children feel safe and empowered. In 2020, our community experienced more need than ever due to income and job loss, and we saw a sharp increase in student referrals for our programming to cope with the stressors of isolation and remote instruction. While SSS continued working in five local schools, we expanded operational hours at our Learning Centers to help students stay connected while learning remotely. In addition to providing reliable internet access, assistance with online classes, and tutoring, we emphasized social-emotional learning to promote resilience and overall well-being. With the return of schools to Plan A/in-person instruction in March, we were able to return to the standard afterschool schedule of 2:30-5:00 Monday-Thursday at our Learning Centers.</p>

Activities related to increasing equity, diversity and inclusion:	The nature of our work puts us in Asheville's low-resource communities that are primarily comprised of families of color, and the schools and communities we work in are made up of some of the most diverse populations in Buncombe County. In addition to empowering children and families in our community, Children First/CIS strives to ensure our Staff and Board is representative of the community we serve. Our Board and Staff are committed to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training and education. We are a participating organization in Asheville's Racial Justice Coalition. Furthermore, CIS North Carolina committed to this work by developing a DEI Committee; one of the participants is our Co-Director of Community Supports, Jacquelyn Hall. In addition to providing monthly trainings to North Carolina CIS affiliates, the committee facilitates monthly "watch parties" to view and discuss short films or documentaries on DEI topics.
Activities related to increasing operational excellence:	As our organization has grown, we better understand the need for a variety of funding sources. We are taking several steps to ensure that we can maintain our existing operations and expand in the future. We are working to diversify funding streams and create new partnerships that can ensure the continuation of our work. In addition to working towards our goal of increasing individual, civic/faith, and corporate contributions to our organization by 40%, we are seeking out newer sources of funding in the community.

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Progress toward annual goals

Measure	Annual Goal	Actual Results (Enter Data) Please only include new data for the specific quarter				Progress toward Annual Goal
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
# of students receiving "Tier 1" supports	2,000	636	208	-	1,284	2,128
# of students receiving "Tier 2 and 3" supports	150	42	43	23	26	134
% of case managed students that meet their attendance, behavior and/or coursework goals	85%			80%	93%	93%
% of case managed students promoted to the next grade	90%	N/A - end of year goal	N/A - end of year goal	N/A - end of year goal	100%	100%

Comments:

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Use of funds to date and any budget considerations

Spending Category	Starting Budget	Total Spending (Enter Data)				Amount Remaining
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Personnel	\$ 70,240	\$ -	\$ 2,853	\$ 39,593	\$ 27,793	\$ 0
Training		\$ -				\$ -
Supplies/Materials		\$ -				\$ -
Meetings		\$ -				\$ -
Equipment/Furniture		\$ -				\$ -
Printing/Marketing		\$ -				\$ -
Licensing/Memberships/Dues/Subscriptions		\$ -				\$ -
Client Support		\$ -				\$ -
Contracts		\$ -				\$ -
Professional Services		\$ -				\$ -
Insurance and Bonds		\$ -				\$ -
Building Maintenance		\$ -				\$ -
Total	\$ 70,240	\$ -	\$ 2,853	\$ 39,593	\$ 27,793	\$ 0

Comments:

Due to the need to spend down our PPP loan, we deferred our invoicing on this grant until Q2.