

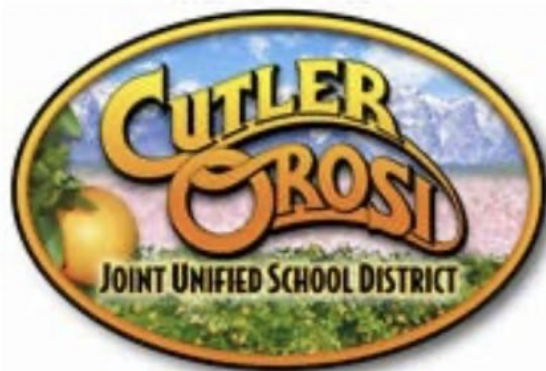
California Community Schools Partnership Program

Implementation Plan 2022–23



EL MONTE MIDDLE SCHOOL

"#LobosLead"



1. Needs and Assets

Academic Achievement Needs

El Monte Middle students at every grade level perform below the state average in English Language Arts and Math. According to 2021-22 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment results, only 38.97% of El Monte Middle students met or exceeded standard in ELA, and only 20.90% met or exceeded standard in Math, compared to statewide percentages of 47.06% (ELA) and 33.38% (Math).

One of the largest achievement gaps in academic achievement at El Monte Middle is among English Learners, who account for 30.6% of all students. Results from the 2021-22 Smarter Balanced Assessment found that only 5.28% of English Learners met or exceeded standard for ELA and only 1.73% met or exceeded standard for Math. English Learners scored 86.6 points below standard in ELA and 153.7 points below standard in Math. Results from the 2021-22 Summative English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) found that only 13.40% of El Monte Middle English Learners are classified as English-language proficient.

School Climate, Engagement, and Social-Emotional Well-Being Needs

Beyond poor academic performance, El Monte Middle students demonstrated declines in school engagement and positive behavior during the 2021-22 school year. The chronic absenteeism rates of English Learners and Students with Disabilities exceeded the state average of 30%. Further, suspension rates of several major student subgroups were “very high” and “high” in the previous school year, and the district’s overall suspension rate of 4.4% was also higher than the statewide average of 3.1%. Poor behavioral and social-emotional outcomes are compounded by the fact that there are very limited mental/behavioral health services available to El Monte Middle students. All of Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified’s service area is designated by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration as a Medically Underserved Area and Population and a Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Area. According to the California Office of Statewide Health Planning Development, the San Joaquin Valley has the lowest number of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and therapists per resident among every region in the state. Public and community-based mental and behavioral health direct services are very limited, and alternative resources for services are scarce and typically inaccessible to COJUSD’s low-income families. While the California Healthcare Foundation estimates that half of California adults and two-thirds of adolescents with mental illness needs do not receive treatment, these percentages are considerably higher among COJUSD’s service population due to the rural nature of the district’s service population combined with the limited availability of mental and behavioral health services. In addition, El Monte Middle’s service population, over 90% of which is Hispanic, is even less likely to access needed mental health services due to one or more of the following barriers: insufficient English language skills required to navigate the system, lack of bilingual/bicultural mental health professionals, negative

stigmas associated with mental illness in Latino culture, and/or limited transportation options required to access services outside the community.

Physical Health and Fitness Needs

El Monte Middle students exhibit many indicators of poor physical health and fitness that are persistent across Tulare County and much of California's Central Valley. The County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (2022) identify Tulare County as "among the least healthy counties in California" and ranked Tulare County 47th among California's 58 counties in the category of Healthy Behaviors-Diet and Exercise, which measures residents' physical inactivity, obesity, and access to exercise opportunities. Tulare County's childhood obesity rate of 45% is among the highest in the state. Physical health and fitness indicators at El Monte Middle parallel the county-wide negative health findings. El Monte Middle students consistently score below their state-level peers on the California Physical Fitness Test. El Monte Middle students demonstrate the greatest need in the fitness standards of Upper Body Strength and Aerobic Capacity, with almost half of 7th graders scoring "Needs Improvement", and more than 30% of students scoring "Needs Improvement – Health Risk" in the standard of Body Composition.

Assets Addressing the Above Needs

While the academic, social-emotional, physical health, and mental/behavioral health needs of El Monte Middle students are significant, El Monte Middle and COJUSD are continually working to develop integrated support services and to identify and leverage any available community resources that could support the district and school in improving outcomes for students. Many of these integrated student supports are coordinated collaboratively between El Monte Middle and COJUSD. The district's MTSS/PBIS framework provides guidance to El Monte Middle staff in assessing student needs and providing appropriate means of intervention. This framework focuses on a proactive and universal approach by teaching social-emotional learning curricula to all students. The district incorporates data-driven practices through the PBIS School Wide Information System (SWIS) Suite, which is used to track behavior and attendance data for re-engagement, and school and district support personnel use data to prioritize student needs related to areas such as school attendance, truancy, and academics.

Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified also provides continued professional development and classroom instruction on social-emotional learning to staff and students. The district recently made adjustments to address the social-emotional needs of students and staff through training and instruction. Through participation in district-led professional learning, all El Monte Middle teachers and staff have completed the research-based Second Step Social Emotional Learning for Adults "Resilience During Crisis," which focuses on building self-care routines. This professional learning and support has allowed El Monte Middle staff to build resiliency through assessments, self-reflection, and surveys and to acquire new social-emotional learning skills to support each other and students during and beyond the pandemic. All El Monte Middle staff are also

provided with resources, training, and SEL curricula to deliver weekly in-class sessions focused on social-emotional learning and bullying prevention.

In addition to providing social-emotional and integrated student support resources and professional learning opportunities, COJUSD has supported El Monte Middle by increasing personnel capacity by hiring counseling and social worker staff to address the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of all students within a multi-tiered system of supports designed to provide a whole-child approach for all students and especially those requiring additional levels of intervention in attendance, academics, and re-engagement. Within the MTSS/PBIS infrastructure, educational social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, attendance officers, and school resource officers continue to provide academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support to students. Student Study Teams progress monitor students' weekly attendance and engagement data to maintain, change, or increase the level of interventions for pupils as well as provide immediate interventions as necessary. Over the coming years, COJUSD and El Monte Middle will continue to strengthen this MTSS framework and PBIS tiered support system to ensure all students are provided with the integrated student supports they need to achieve academic success and social-emotional growth.

2. Core Commitments

El Monte Middle School and Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District share a common vision for implementing a whole-child approach to serving all students, and the value of and need for evidence-based community school support have been highlighted throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past two years, El Monte Middle and COJUSD have frequently engaged with key school stakeholder groups and community-based partners in an effort to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, families, and community members residing in communities throughout the district's entire service area. These efforts have supported El Monte Middle and COJUSD community schools leaders in identifying and articulating needs and service gaps related to areas such as student academic achievement, social-emotional well-being, physical health and nutrition, and mental/behavioral health.

The overall vision of El Monte Middle School's and COJUSD's proposed CCSP Implementation Project is to strengthen identified improvement areas within the existing community school model in order to enhance the fidelity of community school implementation and meet the needs of students, families, and community members. To fulfill this vision, El Monte Middle and COJUSD will collaboratively work to accomplish four CCSP Implementation Project goals:

Goal 1: Improve the quality and increase the scope of integrated student support services within each COJUSD community school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Goal 2: Increase opportunities for authentic engagement with parents and family members and build the capacity of parents and families to effectively partner in their child’s education and healthy youth development

Goal 3: Enhance professional learning and opportunities for collaborations focused on improving student and school outcomes among COJUSD school administrators, teachers, and student support staff

Goal 4: Enhance expanded learning opportunities to improve students’ academic achievement, social-emotional well-being, physical fitness and health, and mental/behavioral health.

Together, these four CCSPP Implementation Project goals fully align with the Four Pillars of the California Community Schools Framework, and the activities corresponding with each goal will advance El Monte Middle’s efforts to promote the Four Cornerstone Commitments of Community Schools from the baseline established during the community schools planning period.

Table 1. Developmental phase of Cornerstone Commitments at El Monte Middle School

Exploration	Emerging	Evolving	Excelling
1. A Commitment to Assets-Driven and Strength-Based Practice			Evolving
2. A Commitment to Racially Just and Restorative School Climates			Emerging
3. A Commitment to Powerful, Culturally Proficient and Relevant Instruction			Emerging
4. A Commitment to Shared Decision Making and Participatory Practices			Evolving

CCSPP Goal 1: Improve the quality and increase the scope of integrated student support services within El Monte Middle School’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports

This CCSPP Goal aligns with:

COJUSD LCAP Goal 1: Achieve academic excellence and meet the needs of all students in a safe and supportive environment so that all students will be college and career ready and prepared to compete in a global economy.

COJUSD LCAP Goal 3: Create efficient and effective systems that are innovative, accountable, and proactive to support 21st century learning

Community Schools Pillar 1: Integrated student supports

Cornerstone Commitment 1: A commitment to assets-driven and strength-based practice

Cornerstone Commitment 2: A commitment to racially just and restorative school climates

Cornerstone Commitment 4: A commitment to shared decision making and participatory practices

CCSPP Goal 2: Increase opportunities for authentic engagement with parents and family members and build the capacity of parents and families to effectively partner in their child’s education and healthy youth development

This CCSPP Goal aligns with:

COJUSD LCAP Goal 2: Build human capacity by investing in training, coaching, and setting expectations for students, parents, staff, and the Board to support student achievement.

Community Schools Pillar 3: Collaborative leadership and practices

Cornerstone Commitment 1: A commitment to assets-driven and strength-based practice

Cornerstone Commitment 2: A commitment to racially just and restorative school climates

Cornerstone Commitment 3: A commitment to powerful, culturally proficient and relevant instruction

Cornerstone Commitment 4: A commitment to shared decision making and participatory practices

CCSPP Goal 3: Enhance professional learning and opportunities for collaborations focused on improving student and school outcomes among El Monte Middle School administrators, teachers, and student support staff

This CCSPP Goal aligns with:

COJUSD LCAP Goal 1: Achieve academic excellence and meet the needs of all students in a safe and supportive environment so that all students will be college and career ready and prepared to compete in a global economy.

COJUSD LCAP Goal 2: Build human capacity by investing in training, coaching, and setting expectations for students, parents, staff, and the Board to support student achievement.

Community Schools Pillar 2: Family and community engagement

Cornerstone Commitment 4: A commitment to shared decision making and participatory practices

CCSPP Goal 4: Enhance expanded learning opportunities to improve students' academic achievement, social-emotional well-being, physical fitness and health, and mental/behavioral health.

This CCSPP Goal aligns with:

COJUSD LCAP Goal 1: Achieve academic excellence and meet the needs of all students in a safe and supportive environment so that all students will be college and career ready and prepared to compete in a global economy.

COJUSD LCAP Goal 3: Create efficient and effective systems that are innovative, accountable, and proactive to support 21st century learning

Community Schools Pillar 4: Extended learning time and opportunities

Cornerstone Commitment 1: A commitment to assets-driven and strength-based practice

3. Measurable Goals and Activities

Goal 1: Improve the quality and increase the scope of integrated student support services within El Monte Middle School's Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Community Schools Pillar Aligned with Goal 1: Integrated Student Supports

Project Activities Supporting Goal 1: COJUSD's CCSPP implementation Project will significantly increase El Monte Middle School's capacity to coordinate and deliver evidence-based integrated student support services by hiring district and site-specific personnel. A PBIS Coordinator will (1) support all COJUSD community schools in improving the fidelity of PBIS implementation, enhancing social-emotional learning strategies, and promoting restorative practices; (2) provide training and consultation support to behavioral support staff, paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators; (3) collaborate with school leaders, special education teachers, and staff on strategies for supporting students who are struggling with behavioral challenges; and (4) consult with parents, families, and student supporters regarding strategies required to improve behavior supports and make appropriate accommodations/modifications. A Lead Social Worker (MSW) will increase district and school capacity to serve COJUSD's most at-risk students by (1) supporting two new Social Workers to be hired as part of the CCSPP Project to provide school-based Tier II and Tier III intervention to students and (2) collaborating with parents and family members to promote students' social, emotional,

mental, and behavioral wellbeing both at school and in the home. Two new Social Workers (BSW) will collaborate with the Lead Social Worker to (1) provide a full range of social work services to COJUSD students, including screening and assessment, individual and group counseling, and coordination with outside wraparound service agencies; (2) provide individual and group services that emphasize improved educational performance, positive social skills, behavioral functioning, and overall improved mental health and wellness; (3) provide training and consultation support to COJUSD teachers and support staff; (4) consult with parents, families, and student supporters to conduct trainings regarding behavior supports, disability awareness, and appropriate accommodations/modifications; and (5) serve as a liaison for school referrals to community resources and agencies.

Goal 2: Increase opportunities for authentic engagement with parents and family members and build the capacity of parents and families to effectively partner in their child's education and healthy youth development

Community Schools Pillar Aligned with Goal 2: Family and community engagement

Project Activities Supporting Goal 2: Three primary activities will supplement the efforts of COJUSD's Family Education Center and address identified service gaps. First, COJUSD will hire a full-time Parenting Program Specialist who will be charged with delivering new evidenced-based parent and family education programming designed to build parents' and family members' capacity to foster social and emotional learning supports in the home and to actively connect families with available community services. The Parenting Program Specialist will also support the El Monte Middle Outreach Aide to ensure the consistency and quality of parent outreach efforts. Second, COJUSD will direct a portion of CCSPP to the Family Education Center to purchase licenses, materials, and supplies to deliver new parent workshops and trainings in areas such as fostering positive social-emotional environments in the home, building emotional resilience, and effectively partnering in a child's education and healthy development. Third, COJUSD and El Monte Middle will develop new outreach and promotional materials (e.g., flyers, pamphlets, banners, digital resources) to broader disseminate community schools information to students, parents, families, and community members.

Goal 3: Enhance professional learning and opportunities for collaborations focused on improving student and school outcomes among El Monte Middle administrators, teachers, and student support staff

Community Schools Pillar Aligned with Goal 3: Collaborative leadership and practices for educators and administrators

Project Activities Supporting Goal 3: Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified's proposed CCSPP Implementation Project will significantly enhance district- and school-level professional learning and collaboration by incorporating new grant-funded professional learning opportunities within each community school's existing menu of teacher professional

development offerings. COJUSD and El Monte Middle will contract with external subject matter experts to deliver in-person and virtual trainings to administrators, teachers, and support staff in areas such as PBIS/MTSS implementation, social and emotional learning strategies, trauma-informed practices, culturally responsive instruction, diversity-equity-inclusion, and restorative practices. Professional learning content and trainers will be selected at the beginning of each program year based on annual Community Schools Leadership Team and Community School Advisory Council review of evaluation reports and qualitative feedback from school leaders and teachers. To ensure that all school personnel can participate in CCSPP-funded professional learning, El Monte Middle will provide teachers and support staff with auxiliary pay for community schools-specific efforts that are above and beyond their normal contract duties. This will include time to participate in new community schools professional learning opportunities and engage with other educators in professional learning communities to collaboratively assess student learning and behavioral outcomes, share best practices and lessons learned during new professional learning sessions, and design interventions for students requiring targeted academic, behavioral, and/or social-emotional supports.

Goal 4: Enhance expanded learning opportunities to improve students' academic achievement, social-emotional well-being, physical fitness and health, and mental/behavioral health

Community Schools Pillar Aligned with Goal 4: Extended learning time and opportunities

Project Activities Supporting Goal 4: COJUSD and El Monte Middle will strategically braid CCSPP Implementation Grant funding with existing investments supporting expanded learning programming to continue to proactively address students' pandemic-related learning loss and declines in social-emotional well-being. First, to address students' academic needs, El Monte Middle will increase expanded learning program academic assistance by contracting with more tutors to provide targeted academic support during after school and summer sessions. In addition to providing extended-day and extended-year academic support, tutors will lead sessions specifically designed to support students struggling to meet grade-level standards and students with significant learning loss due to COVID-19 disruptions. El Monte Middle will contract with tutors trained in serving special needs students and English Learners to ensure these student subgroups receive individualized and targeted support.

Second, to address the physical fitness and nutrition education needs of El Monte Middle students, the district will hire a full-time Expanded Learning Enrichment Activities Facilitator charged with coordinating and overseeing new physical fitness and nutrition education activities to be embedded within the expanded learning programs of all COJUSD community schools. New physical fitness activities will align with California Physical Education Standards and specifically target all six areas of the Healthy Fitness Zone. Student interest surveys will be used to identify the types of sports and exercise activities most appealing to students attending the expanded learning program.

Third, El Monte Middle and COJUSD will contract with community-based organizations and/or local government agencies to lead new academic assistance and youth enrichment activities designed to produce positive youth development and improve students' social-emotional skills, particularly among students requiring targeted support. These investments will be braided with existing funding for expanded learning in order to enhance and expand current service levels and provide year-round programming.

Lastly, El Monte Middle will provide new student transportation options to ensure all students and family members have equitable access to community school services offered beyond the regular school day. Due to the rural nature of El Monte Middle's communities, students and parents many times require transportation services to attend activities and access services, especially after school and during summer months. These new transportation options are required to ensure equitable access to expanded learning programming, especially among low-income students and those living in rural and remote communities.

In addition to valuing community partnerships and ensuring the shared governance of community schools efforts, Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified's community schools model places a strong emphasis on ongoing assessment, review, reflection, and collaborative decision-making. Over the five-year CCSPP Implementation Project grant period, COJUSD's Community Schools Leadership Team and site-level Community School Advisory Councils will engage with an external evaluator to conduct formative and summative evaluations of each community school and the overall CCSPP Implementation Project. The evaluation will include quantitative and qualitative assessments to determine (1) the district's and its community school's success in enhancing the community schools model, as measured by improved alignment to the California Community Schools Framework and (2) the CCSPP Implementation Project's overall impact and success in meeting target performance measures related to student, school, and community outcomes.

In order to measure the fidelity of community schools implementation, the evaluator will develop a rubric of implementation that quantifies expectations for implementation of each community school component as articulated by the California Community Schools Framework, specifically the Four Pillars and Four Cornerstone Commitments of Community Schools. Expectations may be expressed in terms of the number of community schools activities conducted, services offered, products created, trainings held, or participants served. Although implementation scales may vary, the rubric will categorize each component as not implemented, partially implemented, mostly implemented, or fully implemented. Annual fidelity of implementation assessment will determine site-specific improvement from Year 1 baseline and areas of need, which will inform the planning and provision of community schools technical assistance and support offered throughout the grant period. Applying a rubric of implementation at the site level will also allow for comparison of implementation progress across COJUSD community schools and the use of implementation level as an independent variable in outcome studies.

In order to measure CCSPP Implementation Project impact, the evaluator will establish baseline data at the start of the project period across each measure to be assessed to determine the project's success in accomplishing the four project goals. Evaluation tools and methods will include (1) California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) results to assess students' academic growth in ELA and Math; (2) California Healthy Kids Survey results to assess factors such as school climate, student engagement, and social-emotional development; (3) multiple measures that assess student behavioral outcomes (e.g., attendance, dropout rates, suspension/expulsion rates); (4) parent, family, and community surveys and focus groups to obtain qualitative feedback regarding the perceived quality of community schools services and service gaps/needs; and (5) teacher/staff surveys to obtain qualitative feedback regarding the perceived quality of professional learning and collaborative leadership.

COJUSD's Community Schools Leadership Team and El Monte Middle's Community School Advisory Council will meet at least quarterly to collaboratively review formative evaluation results and at the end of each program year to review summative year-end results. During the final meeting of each year, the Community Schools Coordinator and evaluator will lead all community schools stakeholders in determining project strengths and weaknesses and making improvement decisions to be implemented in the subsequent year. Rigorous project evaluation at both the site and district levels combined with ongoing collaborative reflection and continuous quality improvement will ensure CCSPP Implementation Project investments result in school-wide transformations that benefit COJUSD students, families, and communities long beyond the five-year grant period.

4. Key Staff

El Monte Middle School and Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified's community schools initiative relies on strong district-school-parent-community engagement to facilitate shared decision-making processes that lead to positive student and family outcomes. At the site level, El Monte Middle School has formalized a Community School Advisory Council that leverages the leadership of the School Site Council and English Learner Advisory Council while including additional representatives from community- and faith-based organizations, local businesses, and/or government agencies. Throughout the community schools planning process, the Community School Advisory Council and COJUSD Community Schools Leadership Team meaningfully engaged with key community stakeholders through focus groups, listening/input sessions, and surveys to gather and consider multiple perspectives regarding the quality of each community school's service offerings, strengths, improvement areas, emerging needs (particularly needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic), existing community assets and resources that could be leveraged to meet identified needs, and ways to best use CCSPP Implementation Grant investments to address service gaps and build El Monte Middle's and COJUSD's capacity to provide and sustain enhancements to existing community school services. The El Monte Middle Community School Advisory Council and Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified Community Schools Leadership Team have

collaboratively engaged in a formal needs assessment and asset mapping/gap analysis process that included the following methods:

Data Analysis: The Community Schools Leadership Team and Advisory Council compiled and analyzed numerical metrics, which included evaluating standardized assessment results, attendance information, California Healthy Kids Survey results, and similar resources that lend perspective on the scope or intensity of phenomenon that may warrant intervention. These efforts included analysis of school and community data sources related to education, health, student/family characteristics, attendance, behavioral data, health statistics, and many other domains.

Document Review: The Community Schools Leadership Team and Advisory Council collaboratively gathered documentation and artifacts that demonstrate the school's strengths and improvement areas. This included a review of the School Accountability Report Card (SARC), School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), evaluation reports from prior projects related to one or more of the Four Pillars of Community Schools, and COJUSD Local Control and Accountability Plans.

Community Resource Scan: The Community Schools Leadership Team and Advisory Council inventoried community-based service providers operating within El Monte Middle and district boundaries. This inventory was organized into a Community Schools Partnership Matrix that outlines the role of each existing partner. In addition to providing a concise summary of active community partnerships, the Partnership Matrix also aids in identifying service gaps that may exist or that might contribute to future community schools efforts.

El Monte Middle's Community School Advisory Council will continue to benefit from strong collaboration with the COJUSD Community Schools Leadership Team, and this district-level support will be significantly enhanced by the proposed CCSPP Implementation Project. Specifically, COJUSD will hire a new Community Schools Coordinator who will (1) serve as the COJUSD lead in implementing the CCSPP Implementation Project and oversee the overall implementation of the community schools process, programs, partnerships, and strategies at the district level; (2) frequently convene with site-level Community School Advisory Councils to effectively manage partnerships and communications across all COJUSD community schools, partners, and stakeholders; (3) participate in community meetings to build relationships and collaboration with community organizations and to leverage all available resources and services that may benefit COJUSD schools, students, families, and community members; (4) oversee site- and district-level data management related to the formative and summative assessment of CCSPP Implementation Project goals and activities; and (5) collaborate with the external evaluator to assess the project's success and engage all Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified stakeholders in ongoing project review and continuous quality improvement efforts.