

Abstract

Project title. *Pathways-to-Success* in the Transition to High School: Testing a Strategy to Scale an Effective Identity-Based Motivation Intervention in Diverse Education Settings

Type of grant request. Mid-phase

Absolute Priorities. 1 (Moderate Evidence) and 3 (Field-Initiated Innovations—Fostering Knowledge and Promoting the Development of Skills that Prepare Students to Be Informed, Thoughtful, and Productive Individuals and Citizens)

Total number of students to be served in the project. 43,000

Grade level(s) to be served by project. Grade 8

Definition of high-need students. 8th-grade students enrolled in public schools in Nevada, a high-need context given high dropout rates, low proficiency rates, high free/reduced lunch and minority enrollment rates, and a high percentage of rural and/or Title I-eligible schools.

Brief project description including project activities. This grant focuses on implementing, testing, and refining a strategy to scale the effective *Pathway-to-Success (Pathways)* intervention in 72 urban, suburban and rural schools in Nevada. *Pathways* is an effective identity-based motivation intervention that helps students see school as the path to connect what they are doing now in school to the person they expect to become in the future; experience their future as imminent with an urgency to work hard now; and understand their experiences of difficulty engaging with schoolwork as a signal that schoolwork is important (“no pain, no gain”) rather than impossible.

Summary of project goals and expected outcomes.

- Maximize impacts on student outcomes (identity-based motivation, self-regulatory behaviors, social and emotional competencies and well-being, and academic outcomes) by implementing *Pathways* with fidelity.
- The University of Southern California (USC) will implement and continuously refine the *Pathways* strategy to scale using teacher and participant feedback and implementation data.
- Summitlab Corporation (Summitlab) in collaboration with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) will conduct an independent evaluation that meets What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations to test the impact of *Pathways* on student outcomes in grades 8 and 9 and disseminate findings to diverse stakeholders.
- USC will develop a network and infrastructure of teacher trainers for continued scaling of *Pathways*.

Any special project features. USC will implement *Pathways* in four successive cohorts of 8th-graders in schools randomly assigned to treatment or delayed treatment across four years.

List all organizations partnering with this project. USC, Summitlab, AIR, the Nevada Department of Education and 13 (11 rural, 2 urban) of 17 local education agencies (LEAs) serving 86 percent of all students in the state of Nevada.