

Manchester Community Schools: Excellence and Equity for all Learners

Applicant: Manchester School District; Manchester, New Hampshire

Co-Applicant: Manchester Proud

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I. Need for Project

a. Introduction

The City of Manchester, New Hampshire (NH) is the largest urban area north of Boston, Massachusetts (MA) with a total population of about 115,000 residents.(1) Despite NH's rural/suburban composition and public perception as a wealthy State, the City of Manchester is like other urban areas within New England (e.g., Lowell, MA) grappling with poverty, health inequity, and achievement gaps that impede true opportunity for *all* students and families in the school district. Led by the Manchester School District and Manchester Proud, Manchester Community Schools is founded on strong community partnerships and authentic family engagement to foster health and wellbeing, create career-connected learning opportunities, and provide pathways for economic mobility. This proposal is submitted under Absolute Priority 1 (Title IA Schoolwide Program Eligibility) and 3 (Capacity Building and Development), and respectively requests consideration for Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2, as well as the Invitational Priority.

b. Magnitude of Need

Community Data Snapshot. With areas of concentrated poverty, the City of Manchester has historically been the most impoverished urban area in the State of New Hampshire. In particular, center city neighborhoods on the Eastside and Westside of the city disproportionately experience household and neighborhood deprivation contributing to negative health outcomes. *Table 1* provides an overview of the health disparities and inequities at a neighborhood level in the city. Manchester Community Schools is focused on serving elementary schools within the Eastside and Westside Center City neighborhoods.

Table 1: Neighborhood Indicators				
Description		Eastside Center City	Westside Center City	Manchester Total
Socio- Demographics	Population age 0-17, 2021	30.4%	27.2%	18.9%
	Any race/ethnicity, foreign-born, 2021	37.3%	21.5%	14.6%
	Childhood Poverty, 2021	63.5%	42.7%	22.1%
	Single Parent Households with children under 18, 2019	61%	53%	46%
Health & Wellness	Uninsured, population 0-64, 2021	47.5%	15%	10.4%
	Income Inequality. 2021 (negative value = disproportionately impoverished)	-46.2	-29.4	-6.5
	Teen birth rate per 1,000 females aged 15-19, 2020	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	17.2
	Limited healthy food access	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	63.1%

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Safety & Crime	Crime rate per 100,000, 2016	6552.1	4376.2	3447
	Violent crime rate per 100,000, 2017	1040.2	1610.4	635.9
Housing	Housing Lead Exposure Risk Score, 2021 (10=highest risk)	10	9.5	8
	Housing Rent Burden, 2021 ($\geq 30\%$ income to rent)	58%	60.3%	49%
Education & Employment	Adults aged 25+ without high school diploma or equivalent, 2021	34.4%	16.4%	11.4%
	Unemployment rate, 2021	9.8%	6.3%	4.7%
	Adults aged 25+ with postsecondary education, 2021	10.9%	15.9%	35%

Manchester School District. The Manchester School District is the largest in NH serving nearly 12,500 students from preschool-12th grade. The district is the most racially and ethnically diverse with approximately 75 languages spoken across the schools and over 1600 Spanish-speaking families. Other top languages include Arabic, Swahili, Vietnamese, and Nepali. Approximately 18% of the student population are English language learners and 21% have an identified disability. Nearly half of the student population (48.8%) is considered economically

disadvantaged based on Federal Free and Reduced Meal Program enrollment. 575 students are living at some level of homelessness with another 550 students in the foster care system.

Target Schools. Manchester Community Schools is targeting two Title IA Elementary Schools – Beech Street and Gossler Park. Beech Street Elementary School (Beech Street) serves approximately 475 students from Kindergarten to 5th Grade and is located in the Eastside center city neighborhoods. Of the total student body, 86.2% of students are enrolled in the Federal Free and Reduced Meals Program, 31.2% are English Language Learners, and 20.1% have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Beech Street is designated as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement School by the State of New Hampshire Department of Education (NH DOE). This designation means that the school is among the lowest performing 5% of Title I Schools in NH. School performance is determined by four key areas – academic achievement, growth, progress toward English language proficiency, and equity. As a result, Beech Street receives additional funding and technical assistance to address identified needs and create sustainable systems of support for students and teachers. 100% of classes at Beech Street are taught by educators certified in the subject area (as compared with 95% in the district and 93% statewide).

Gossler Park Elementary School (Gossler Park) serves approximately 300 students from Kindergarten to the 4th Grade and is located in the Westside center city neighborhoods. Of the total student body, 75% are enrolled in the Federal Free and Reduced Meals Program, 21.4% are English Language Learners, and 27.5% have an IEP. With the Merrimack River running North to South in the center of the city, it serves as a natural barrier creating two sides of the city – East and West. Gossler Park is located on the Westside of the city, which has historically been perceived as having fewer services and providers than the Eastside of the city. This was an important determining factor when selecting schools of focus that are geographically accessible

on both sides of the river. 100% of classes at Gossler Park are taught by educators certified in the subject area (as compared with 95% in the district and 93% statewide).

Both schools have also been employing strategies based on the Community Schools Framework since 2014. Activities have included but are not limited to physical campus improvements to promote physical activity and inclusivity; leadership programs to support life skills development; family engagement and enrichment opportunities; enhanced onsite mental health services; and community care coordination via Community Health Workers. This experience will be invaluable to the successful implementation of the proposed pipeline services.

Sociodemographics. In Manchester, 22% of children are living in poverty, compared with an average of 16.9% across the country's largest cities. The Beech Street and Gossler Park neighborhood areas have the highest rates of childhood poverty within the city at 63.5% and 42.7%, respectively. The neighborhood areas of Beech Street and Gossler Park are also the most racially and ethnically diverse areas in the city, with concentrated poverty further compounding inequity in educational and health outcomes.

Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child and the American Academy of Pediatrics have acknowledged that early exposure to high-poverty environments may lead to higher levels of toxic stress and adverse childhood outcomes. For example, mothers living in poor neighborhoods have a disproportionate risk of infant mortality and neighborhood deprivation is associated with issues in cognitive and behavioral development in early childhood. Additionally, family instability and transiency are seen as major drivers of poor academic outcomes among students in Manchester. Approximately 800 Manchester students (6.5%) are living at some level of homelessness, with the majority elementary school age. Selected sociodemographic and family instability indicators by school area can be found in *Table 2*.

TABLE 2	Selected Sociodemographic and Family Instability Indicators by School Area					
School	Total School Enrollment	% Minority	% English Language Learners	% Free & Reduced Meals	% Homeless	% Mobility
Community School: Beech Street	477	71.7%	31.2%	86.2%	12.8%	10.7%
Community School: Gossler Park	313	54.3%	21.4%	75.1%	<10%	12.5%
Total Manchester	12,428	49.2%	18.1%	48.8%	6.5%	n/a
Total State	168,621	16.6%	<10%	23%	1.9%	n/a
<p>*Homeless is defined as living in a shelter, living in a double-up residence or living unsheltered.</p> <p>**Mobility is defined as the number of students who leave or enter a school in one academic year as a percentage of the total enrollment for the academic year.</p>						

School Engagement and Hope. Students attending Beech Street will attend Central High School and students attending Gossler Park will attend West High School. During the most recent School Year (2022-2023), Manchester high school students completed a survey tool to rate their level of involvement in and enthusiasm for school (engagement) and the ideas and

energy they have for the future (hope). Survey results show that only 22% of students at Central High School are “engaged” with the majority of responses indicating that they are “not engaged” (39%) or “actively disengaged” (39%). Results at West High School show a similar response with 32% indicating that they are “engaged” and the majority responding that they are “not engaged” (36%) or “actively disengaged” (32%). Moreover, approximately 60% of students at both high schools feel “stuck” or “discouraged” about the future.

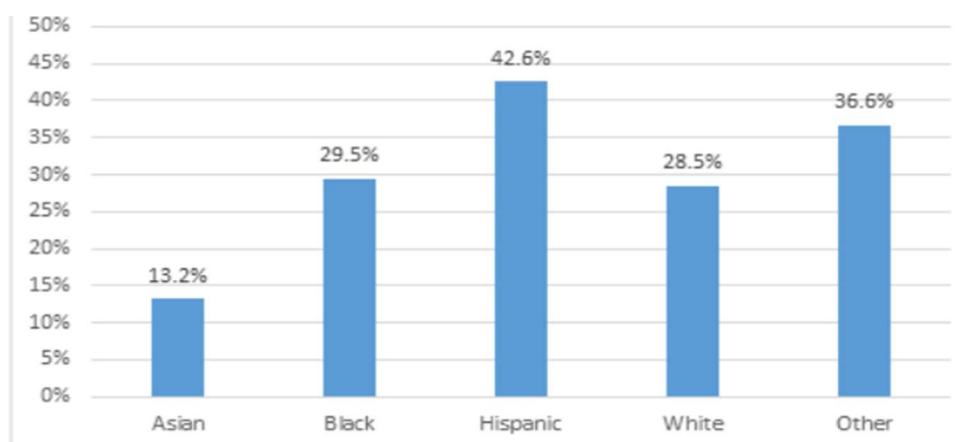
Attendance, Behavior, and Course Completion (ABC) Framework. The Manchester School District has an established performance dashboard that monitors progress and achievement based on the ABC Framework – Attendance, Behavior, and Course Completion. The district aims to increase the rate of attendance and engagement in school education; decrease behavioral incidents and address trauma among students; and increase student achievement and career readiness.

Attendance: Studies show that students who have regular school attendance experience higher levels of academic achievement than those who are chronically absent (15 or more missed days of school in an academic year). While there are many causes of chronic absenteeism, systemic inequities by race and ethnicity play an important role. In turn, frequent absences lead to widening gaps in educational achievement between racial/ethnic groups.

According to City Health Dashboard, 31.5% of Manchester’s students across the school district were chronically absent. By comparison, only 18.3% of students across the country’s largest cities were chronically absent in the same year. At Beech Street and Gossler Park, the rates of chronic absenteeism among students are 22% and 16%, respectively. When considering differences by race and ethnicity, **Figure 1** shows that chronic absenteeism in Manchester was

much higher among Hispanic and other racial/ethnic groups, similar among White and Black students, and the lowest among Asian students.

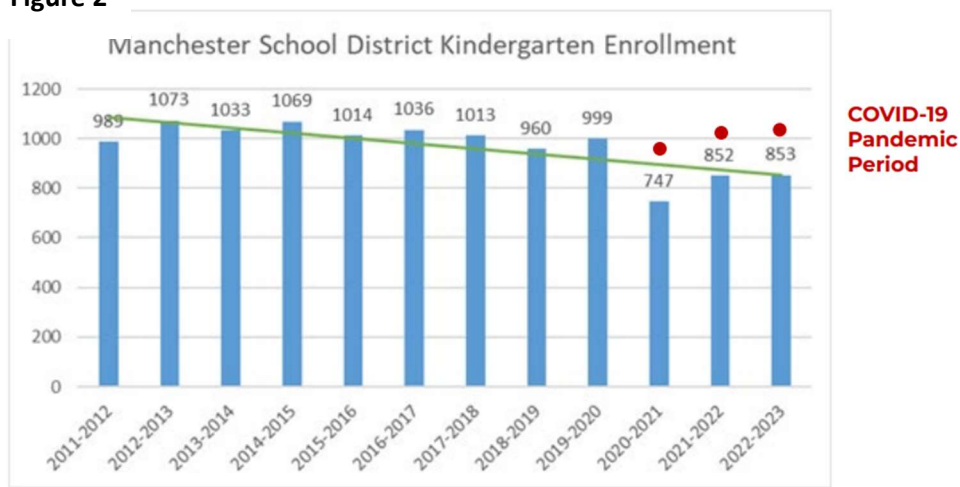
Figure 1 Chronic Absenteeism Rate by Race/Ethnicity



Source: City Health Dashboard

In the State of NH, while school districts are required to offer at least half-day Kindergarten, enrollment/attendance in a Kindergarten program is not legally mandated. Consequently, Kindergarten programming is significantly underfunded and underutilized (Figure 2). Students who do not attend a Kindergarten Program are less likely to enter first grade with the necessary learning foundations for success, and consequently, are already behind grade level.

Figure 2



Source: NH Department of Education

Behavior: The NH Department of Education (NH DOE) requires all school districts in the State to report on school environment indicators, including in-school and out-of-school suspension rates. In Manchester for SY2022, the out-of-school suspension rate is 10.7% with an in-school suspension rate of 1.6%. Comparatively, the state rate of out-of-school suspensions was 4% with in-school suspensions at 3.2%. The elevated rate of out-of-school suspensions may be attributed to a higher number of incidents of violence in Manchester (1347 incidents, which represents 18% of the total incidents in the State). Manchester also has a larger average classroom size at 20 students per classroom as compared with 16 students per classroom statewide.

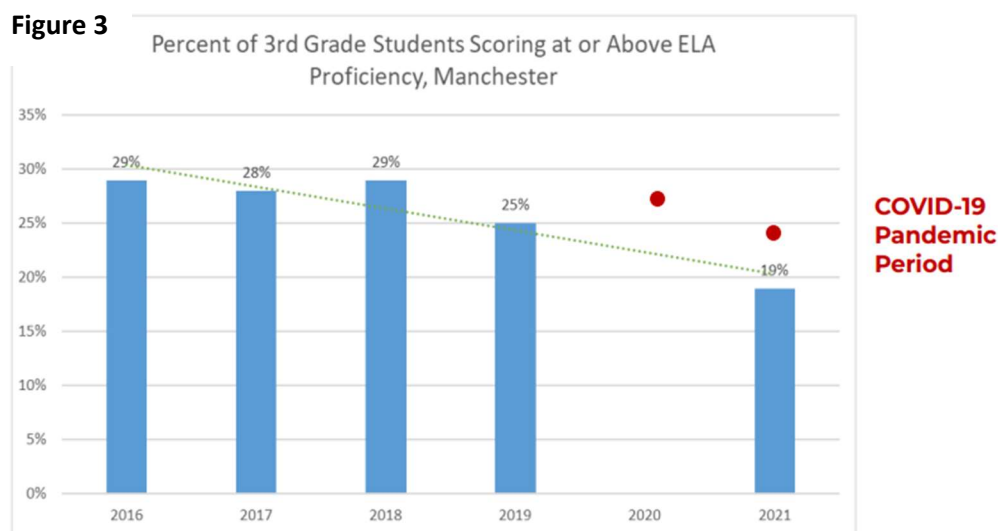
In SY2022, Beech Street had an out-of-school suspension rate of 7.4% and Gossler Park was at 4.2%. In-school suspension rates for Beech Street and Gossler Park were about 1%. When combined, 5% of the reported incidents of violence within the school district occurred at Beech Street and Gossler Park.

Course Completion: The percentage of students who are reading on grade level by third grade is a widely accepted predictor of future academic achievement. Third grade marks the transition when children switch from learning to read, to reading to learn. As such, children who reach fourth grade without reading proficiency are more likely than others to struggle academically.

The data in **Figure 3** indicate that third grade English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency is trending in the wrong direction in Manchester. Between the 2015-2016 and 2020-2021 school years, the percentage of third grade students who scored at or above proficient in ELA declined from 29% to 19%, a drop of nearly 35%. Less than 10% of third grade students at Beech Street and Gossler Park have achieved ELA proficiency (state rate is 45%). Approximately 21% (Beech

Street) and 26% (Gossler Park) of English Language Learners are on track to proficiency, as compared with 47% of other English Language Learner peers with similar achievement histories within NH.

While assessment data for 2019-2020 are not available due to COVID-19 restrictions, numerous studies have shown that pandemic-related school closures had a negative impact on school achievement, particularly for younger students, and likely caused a widening in the achievement gap for students living in poverty.



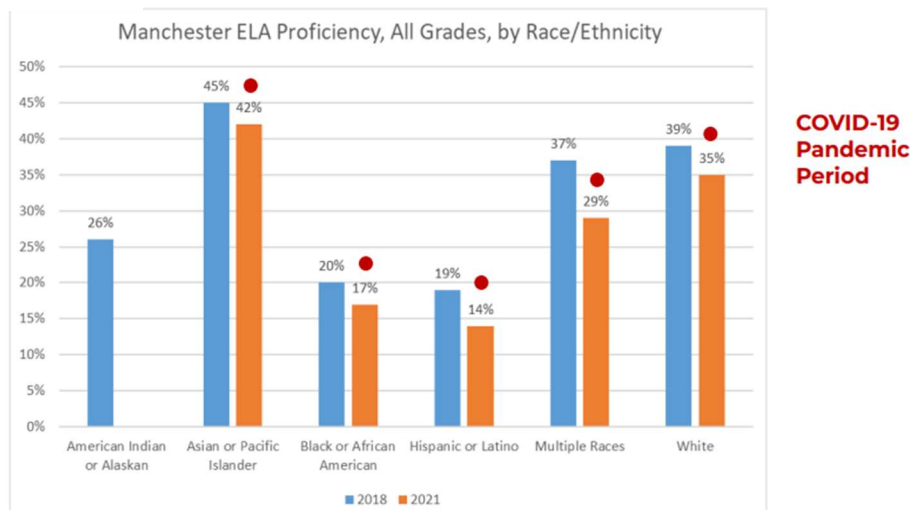
Source: NH Department of Education

*data unavailable for 2020 due to pandemic school closures

Significant differences in ELA proficiency persist among racial/ethnic groups in the Manchester School District (**Figure 4**). Asian/Pacific Islander and White students have the highest levels of ELA proficiency, while Black and Hispanic/Latino students have the lowest levels of proficiency. The gap in achievement between white and black students increased from 48.7% in 2018 to 51.4% in 2021, while the gap between white and Hispanic/Latino students increased from 51.3% to 60.0%.

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Figure 4

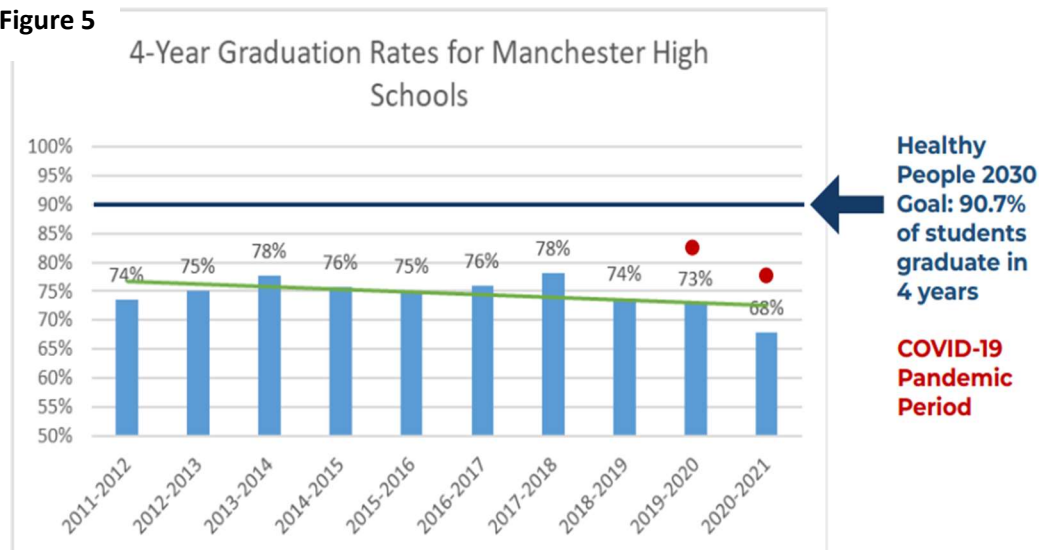


Source: NH Department of Education

*Note: data for American Indian/Alaskan students suppressed in 2021 due to low numbers

On-time, high school graduation rates in Manchester have been on the decline for several years. While this trend was apparent before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the larger-than-predicted drop in graduation rates between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 suggests that the pandemic likely exacerbated an already negative trend (*Figure 5*).

Figure 5



Source: NH Department of Education

c. Support, Resources, and Services to Close Education Gaps

Year One of the grant period will focus on initial development and coordination activities, including community engagement, resulting in a needs assessment and implementation plan to guide pipeline service delivery as proposed within this application. The Behavioral Health Improvement Institute at Keene State College will serve as the outside evaluator for measuring performance pipeline services and local outcomes.

The pipeline services outlined within Manchester Community Schools have been selected to address the needs and educational gaps outlined in the District's ABC Framework.

Attendance: Students will benefit from evidence-based mentorship for continuous school engagement that promotes attendance and makes referrals to mental health support services, as identified. The Manchester School District is also launching a new attendance campaign called Show Up Manchester, which will complement the mentorship program. The University of New Hampshire will also offer Play-Based Kindergarten for guided play experiences shown to have significant learning and developmental outcomes for children in the latest research.

Behavior: Students and families will benefit from expanded healthcare services onsite to better coordinate care and referral for mental health and behavioral assessment and support services (e.g., ADHD). The Manchester School District will continue to scale a Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) to establish protocols and practices to fidelity with this evidence-based approach. Additionally, formal communication and coordination systems will be established with the Adverse Childhood Experiences Response Team, a national model between healthcare and law enforcement working to address trauma exposure among children at home and the community-at-large.

Course Completion: Students will benefit from in-classroom and out-of-school opportunities for STEM education focused on career-connected learning opportunities; including an internship program with high school students to provide teaching experiences at Beech Street and Gossler Park within STEM education. In addition, a comprehensive vision screening program with access to corrective lenses will be established for IEP students to expedite plan development and bolster academic achievement.

Lastly, a Family Academy model will be established to serve as the foundation of support addressing all of the ABCs. The Family Academy will focus on reaching parents/caregivers with connections to postsecondary education pathways that lead to employment opportunities for economic mobility. English as a Second Language will be provided as an entry point for those of whom English is not their native language and could use these skills to provide connections with the school, secure a job, or navigate local resources. Bilingual Family Liaisons will be utilized to support BIPOC families in school transitions and ongoing communication.

II. Quality of the Project Design

Manchester Community Schools presents an integrated model founded on school-community partnerships that align to improve student health and wellbeing, increase career-connected learning opportunities, and ensure opportunities for family economic mobility and school connectedness. This model is aligned with the district's most recent strategic plan (2020), which identified community schools as a priority strategy for full implementation.

a. Evidence-based Design

ABCs Framework. The Manchester School District uses indicators from the domains of Attendance, Behavior, and Course completion (ABCs) as an early warning sign of student challenges and system performance gaps. Research has identified attendance, behavior, and course performance as powerful predictors of high school completion (Bruce et al. 2011). In particular, Grade 9 course performance is strongly linked with high school graduation (Allensworth and Easton 2005). Moreover, an Institute of Education Sciences guidebook recommends that ABC data be used by educators at an individual level to prevent students from dropping out of high school (Dynarski et al. 2008).

The ABCs Framework provides a mechanism for tracking and predicting the performance of the Manchester School District in achieving our mission of producing graduates who can demonstrate:

- ★ Communication and collaboration skills: Listening and articulating effectively for a variety of purposes, including working well with others while being willing to understand and offer alternate points of view;
- ★ Critical thinking and problem solving: The ability to identify and solve challenges through creative thinking and innovation;

- ★ A growth mindset and resilience/adaptability: The ability to persevere despite hardship and to view challenges as opportunities to grow;
- ★ An equity mindset and cultural competency/empathy: Recognizing and respecting one's own culture and other cultures to work well with other and more fully understand the impact of national and world events and history;
- ★ The key work and life ready “basics” we need to succeed and thrive: The skills and knowledge needed to succeed in any environment; and
- ★ STEM/technology skills: Leveraging scientific inquiry to solve problems and be technologically literate and able to use a range of tools to solve problems, communicate, and collaborate effectively.

Through equitable access to high quality academic, social, and applied learning, students are ready to excel in college and career life (*Figure 6*).



Districtwide Vision, Action and Values. The Manchester School District’s 2020 strategic plan set a districtwide vision for learning and defined key organizational values to guide the local educational system. Our theory of action is best captured by identifying the core facets of learning and values present in the current system. Equity and inclusion are at the heart of our learning model and values (**Figure 7**). Manchester Community Schools is borne out of these learning principles and values and provides an evidence-based approach to the successful implementation of school-community partnerships that bolster student success.

Figure 7



Needs Assessment Process. The district’s 2020 strategic plan was co-created in direct partnership with Manchester Proud, a community-driven movement established to support the district in achieving student success and building exceptional public schools. The creation of the strategic plan included an extensive community needs assessment process over two years that involved both internal and external stakeholders. In our research, it was imperative to begin with a broad range of Manchester stakeholders, including students, families, community members,

educators, business leaders, and more. Our outreach and community engagement efforts involved neighborhood canvassing in all 12 city wards, a community-wide survey, key informant interviews, and in-depth community and school-based listening sessions. More than 5,000 stakeholders were reached through this process to provide their perspectives and shape the strategic direction of the district.

Findings from community engagement identified trust issues and a desire to see equitable opportunities and experiences for all students, especially those in special education, English learners, and students of color. The school staff within the district and the diversity of the student population were seen as major assets within the district. One of the leading recommendations in the plan to support student growth and learning was creating a formal system of wraparound support through a Community Schools approach with braided funding and better data sharing. This recommendation resulted in the hiring of a Community Partnerships Coordinator at Manchester Proud to officially create a coordinated system of community partnerships. Additionally, the district established a position specifically dedicated to equity within its leadership structure known as Chief Equity Officer.

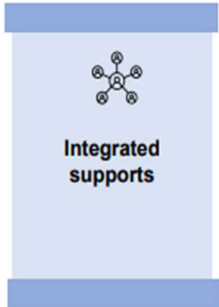
Manchester Community Schools aims to replicate methods from the strategic plan's community engagement process to further inform pipeline strategy implementation at Beech Street and Gossler Park. We are proposing that the initial year of the grant period be focused on the development and coordination of proposed pipeline services, including an extensive community engagement process, to identify academic, physical, nonacademic, health, mental health, and other needs of students, families, and community residents. In addition, we will gather data on performance indicators to share best practices from the implementation of pipeline services. Primary components of the community engagement process will include:

- ☐ Existing Data Review: Our local outside evaluator (Behavioral Health Improvement Institute – BHII – at Keene State College) will further refine the performance measurement plan, including identifying sources of baseline data and appropriate benchmarks for key metrics.
- ☐ Asset Mapping: Manchester Proud’s Community Partnerships Coordinator facilitates an existing Partnership Network Group for building community partnerships that expand our collective knowledge, expertise, experience, capacity, resources, opportunity, and commitment to our common goal of excellence and equity for all learners within the district. Additionally, an online resource directory known as the Manchester Proud Community Compass has been created to assist families in navigating local resources for students, as well as for engaging community partners in opportunities to work more closely together in addressing community needs. Initial asset mapping to support this proposal has already been conducted; however, additional attention to local assets will enable a more in-depth review of local resources and the identification of investments for Manchester Community School sustainability. Manchester Proud’s Community Partnerships Coordinator will lead this expanded asset mapping process.
- ☐ School/Community Listening Sessions: The Community Schools Coordinators, with support from Manchester Proud’s Community Partnerships Coordinator, will organize at least two listening sessions at Beech Street and Gossler Park to hear from parents/caregivers and school staff/teachers about their vision for Manchester Community Schools and important considerations for ensuring success.
- ☐ Family and Community Partner Surveys: A community survey tool will be administered at Beech Street and Gossler Park to solicit feedback on needs and barriers as it pertains to

pipeline services and successful implementation. Survey respondents will include parents/caregivers, staff, teachers, community partners, and administrators. The tool will be offered in multiple languages and modalities (e.g., paper, electronic). The district's Bilingual Family Liaisons will conduct outreach to families to ensure that they are engaged in the survey tool and able to provide their perspectives. The Community School Coordinator at each school will lead survey administration efforts with guidance from BHII, as needed.

- ❑ Key Informant Interviews: School and community leaders will be engaged by the Community Schools Coordinators and Manchester Proud's Community Partnerships Coordinator (at least 6 interviews/school) for in-depth conversations about the pipeline services, the best indicators for performance measurement, and sustainability planning through opportunities for systems and policy change and resource development.

Full-Service Community School Pillars. Nationally, it is well known that Community Schools have a measurable impact on improving outcomes including attendance, behavior, credit attainment, grade promotion, graduation, family and school climate indicators (Johnston, 2020). Manchester Community Schools has existing strategies across all four pillars. This funding opportunity will strengthen and bolster services, while allowing new strategies to be introduced based on the leading student/family needs.


Pillar #1: Objective	Pipeline Services	Performance Measures
 <p>Improve the overall health and wellbeing of students to enable them to consistently engage in school and mitigate adverse childhood experiences.</p>	<p>Social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports.</p>	<p>% students scoring at proficient and above on standardized ELA testing; % improvement in the rate of at least ½ day unexcused absences; % improvement in chronic absenteeism; % improvement in office discipline referral rates</p>
Evidence Base: School-based health centers; Social-emotional learning		

Pillar #1 – Integrated Student Supports: Both Beech Street and Gossler Park have a school-based health clinic operated onsite by Amoskeag Health, a federally qualified health center. The school-based health center will serve as the foundation of pipeline services in Pillar #1. School-based health centers have been serving students and families in under-resourced communities across the United States for over 50 years. Access to health services in the school setting has been shown to broaden overall access to health services, improve health outcomes for children with chronic conditions, reduce time spent out of the classroom, and improve school attendance and performance while also improving health equity (Arneson, 2019; Love, 2019).

Additionally, the Granite YMCA currently implements an evidence-based model for student mentorship known as Y-STAY. The program provides students with a critical link to adult role

models, new positive experiences, and a strengthened connection to learning and education.

Youth-adult connectedness is a foundational protective factor for adolescent health and well-being. Research has shown a high-quality youth-mentor relationship is significantly associated with positive social, academic, and health-related behaviors (Sieving, 2017).


Pillar #2: Objective	Pipeline Services	Performance Measures
<div>  <p>Expanded and enriched learning time</p> </div> <p>Increase career-connected learning opportunities to foster hope for the future and inspire students to seek postsecondary education and employment.</p>	<p>1. Activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness.</p> <p>2. High-quality school and out-of-school time.</p>	<p>% decrease in office discipline referral rates; % increase in instructional time; % students scoring at proficient and above on standardized testing; % students graduating high school on time</p>
Evidence Base: STEM educational programming		

Pillar #2 – Expanded and Enriched Learning Time: SEE Science Center (SEE) is the only science-based, hands-on children’s museum in the Greater Manchester region. SEE provides out-of-school learning opportunities to enrich the student experience and provide direct exposure to STEM learning. The museum field trip is a time-honored tradition for most American school children. There are numerous learning research studies that have demonstrated that field trips are an important out-of-school enrichment opportunity for exposing students to new experiences, increasing positive associations with the subject matter, and improving subject matter experience

recall (Knutson, 2016). Part of equitable schooling is acknowledging inequalities outside of the classroom, such as out-of-school enrichment opportunities, including those traditionally provided through educational field trips in informal learning settings like museums. Factors like cost, transportation, and teacher ratios to coordinate scheduling limit access for low-income schools.


As early as elementary school, these missing extracurricular experiences have an impact on the careers open to students later in life. When students begin planning for their futures, their awareness of potential careers is heavily influenced by what they are exposed to through people they know, what they have learned in school, and what they see on social media and television. If students are unaware of a potential career, they are less likely to make life decisions that point them on a path toward that career. Students from low-income families are on average exposed to fewer career options than their more affluent peers, making it even less likely that they will enter into emerging STEM fields (eSchool News, 2019).

Locally, a rigorous curriculum development process is conducted in shaping STEM experiences by sourcing learning content that is based on grade-appropriate Next Generation Science Standards, while incorporating real-world applications and career exposure. Activities within our local STEM programs follow a project-based learning model and are geared towards developing 21st-century skill competencies, including non-cognitive skills, soft skills, or employability skills including critical thinking, adaptability, problem-solving, oral and written communications, collaboration, creativity, responsibility, professionalism, ethics and technology use (ACTE, 2010).

Pillar #3: Objective	Pipeline Services	Performance Measures
<div>  <p>Active family and community engagement</p> </div> <p>Establish opportunity pathways that promote economic mobility and school connectedness for parents/caregivers.</p>	<p>1. Supports for a child's transition to elementary school and from elementary to middle school.</p> <p>2. Family and community engagement and supports.</p>	<p>% improvement in staff and family perceptions of school climate; % improvement in parent/guardian and staff perceptions of family engagement with schools; % students scoring at proficient and above on standardized testing; % students graduating high school on time</p>
Evidence Base: Parental educational achievement; Authentic community engagement		

Pillar #3 – Active Family and Community Engagement: Schools with strong family engagement are 10 times more likely to improve student learning outcomes. In one longitudinal study across 200 public elementary schools in Chicago (Bryk, 2010), researchers identified five key supports that together determined whether schools could substantially improve students' reading and math scores: school leadership, family and community engagement, education personnel capacity, school learning climate, and instructional guidance. As a resident-driven and founded initiative, Manchester Proud optimizes the district's ability to connect with the community in a meaningful and authentic way. Manchester Proud is co-leading Manchester Community Schools with the district.

Socioeconomic status (defined by parent educational attainment, parent occupation, and family income) is a powerful predictor of children’s developmental outcomes. Variations in these resources predict large academic disparities among children from different socioeconomic backgrounds that persist over the years of schooling, perpetuating educational inequalities across generations (Davis-Keen, 2021). Manchester Community Schools will use a Family Academy model to provide pathways to postsecondary education and job training/employment pipelines. Building opportunity for parents/caregivers not only improves economic mobility to address poverty it directly correlates with student academic achievement and healthy childhood development.

Pillar #4: Objective	Pipeline Services	Performance Measures
<div>  <p>Collaborative leadership and practices to support high-quality teaching</p> </div> <p>Foster shared accountability and collective efficacy to center community schools as a foundation for teaching and learning success.</p>	<p>1. Formal leadership and management structure engaging schools and the community at large; and 2. Utilize Professional Learning Communities to engage the teaching staff and increase student performance.</p>	<p>% improvement in staff and family perceptions of school climate; Teacher turnover rate; #/% fully certified teachers, disaggregated by race/ethnicity</p>
Foundational Strategies: Professional learning communities (PLCs)		

Pillar #4: Professional learning communities (PLCs) are utilized at Beech Street and Gossler Park to engage the teaching staff. According to the latest research, an effective PLC fully

exhibits eight key characteristics: 1) Shared values and vision; 2) Collective responsibility for student learning; 3) Collaboration focused on learning; 4) Individual and collective professional learning; 5) Reflective professional inquiry; 6) Openness, networks, and partnerships; 7) Inclusive membership; and 8) Mutual trust, respect, and support. There is positive and statistically significant evidence of a relationship between two PLC factors (1 - Professional and student learning and 2 - Support for professional learning). The greater the extent of staff involvement reported by primary schools in professional and student learning, the higher the level of student performance and progress (Bolam, 2005).

Additionally, collective impact and efficacy are important factors in improving student achievement. In school settings, when educators believe in their combined ability to influence student outcomes, there are significantly higher levels of academic achievement (Bandura, 1993). Models for collective efficacy in schools have been tested and refined, with researchers finding that as successes and support strengthen teachers' confidence in their teams, student achievement increases as well (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Adams & Forsyth, 2006). Our management structure intentionally engages teachers and staff in the decision-making process and provides opportunities for shared learning through PLCs to foster collective efficacy.

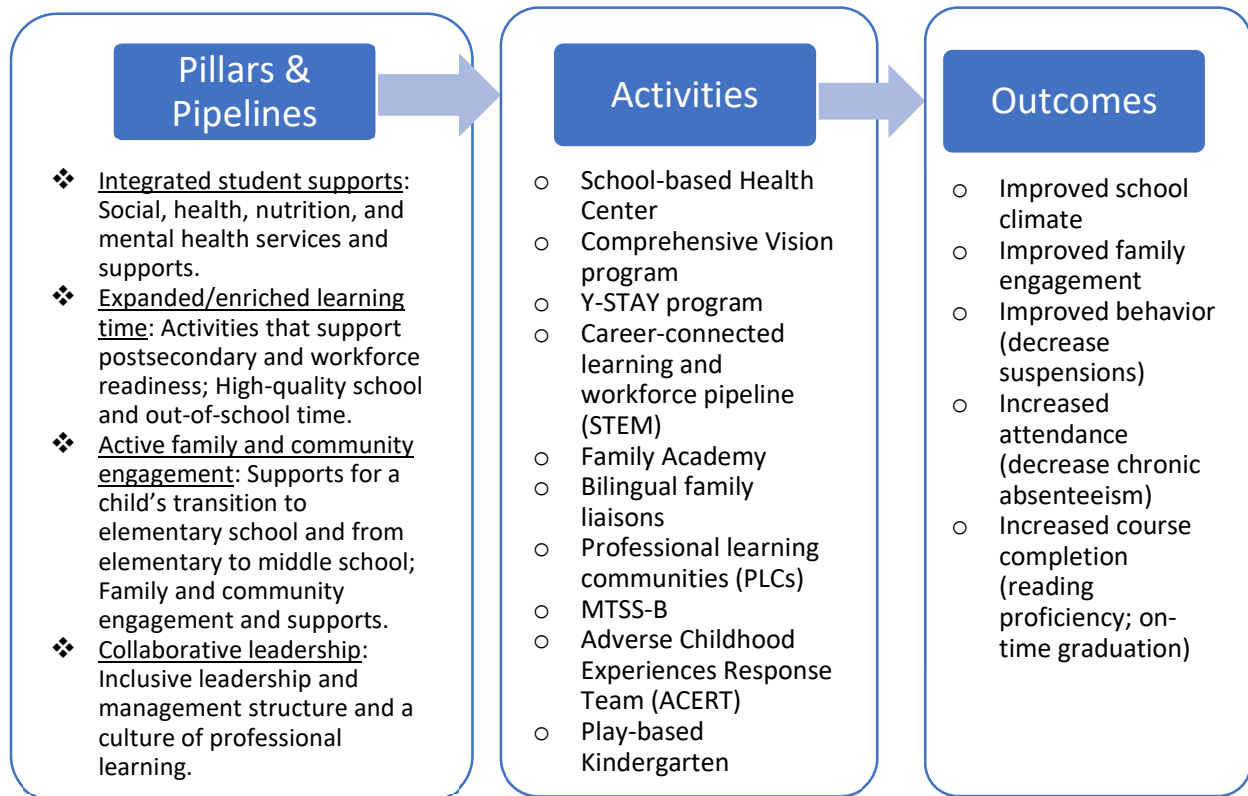
b. Strong Project Rationale

It is well documented in the literature that community school partnerships improve the ABCs – attendance, behavior, and course completion (Rand, 2020). Manchester Community Schools is designed based on the four pillars of the community schools framework with pipeline services directly leading to improvements in the ABCs. **Figure 8** provides a snapshot of the logic model for Manchester Community Schools.

Figure 8: Manchester Community Schools Logic Model

Objectives:

- ❖ *Improve the overall health and wellbeing of students to enable them to consistently engage in school and mitigate adverse childhood experiences.*
- ❖ *Increase career-connected learning opportunities to foster hope for the future and inspire students to seek postsecondary education and employment.*
- ❖ *Establish opportunity pathways that promote economic mobility and school connectedness for parents/caregivers.*
- ❖ *Foster shared accountability and collective efficacy to center community schools as a foundation for teaching and learning success.*



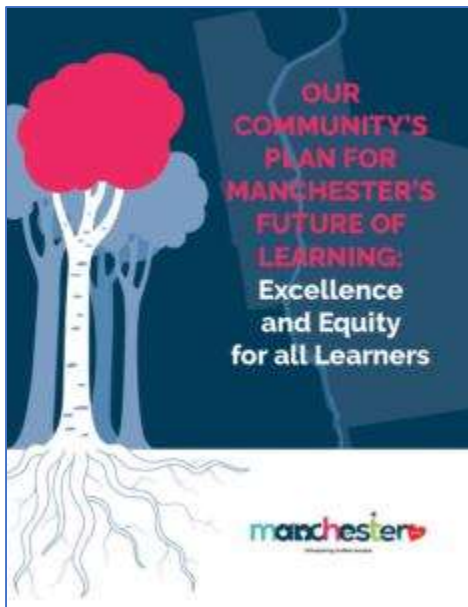
Core Partners: Amoskeag Health; Granite YMCA; International Institute of New England; SEE Science Center; UNH Extension 4H

Supporters: Manchester Health Department; 21st Century Program; ARMI/DEKA; Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce; Southern NH University; Manchester Community College; Elliot Health System; Partners for Rural Impact; Granite United Way

III. Quality of the Project Services

a. Collaborative Leadership Approach

The very foundation of what makes Manchester unique is its ability to create sustained, meaningful partnerships that are inclusive of the community. One strong example of this is the process by which the latest strategic plan for the Manchester School District was created. The strategic plan was co-created by Manchester Proud, a local movement of community residents that mobilized in 2017 to champion student success and reimagine the city's public schools.



Between late 2017 and February 2020, Manchester Proud partnered with the Manchester community, school district, its board, administration, principals, teachers, and staff to develop a clear, comprehensive, and compelling plan for the future of our schools, which was subsequently accepted by the Board of School Committee as the strategic plan for the district.

Today, Manchester Proud is an official NH non-profit corporation with an Executive Director, Community

Partnerships Coordinator, and Communications Coordinator. Manchester Proud organizes a School-to-Community Partnership Network with over 65 community-based member organizations and a 24-member Community Council of local leaders, parents, former students, and educators to shape and drive the implementation of the strategic plan. Manchester Proud is governed by a Champions Council with the legal authority to act as a Board of Directors. In addition, approximately 55 local businesses have pledged their support as a Manchester Proud Champion.

Together with the district, Manchester Proud works to define priorities for student and family success and build in the accountability needed for effective implementation of the strategic plan. Adopting a districtwide community schools approach was identified as a priority recommendation for action, after an extensive community engagement process that captured the voices of over 5,000 community residents and partners. Acting as the district's bridge to the community, Manchester Proud organizes school-to-community partnerships to support student success, including an annual community festival known as CelebratED to bring the community together at the start of each school year.

Manchester Proud is co-leading Manchester Community Schools with the Manchester School District. Its established School to Community Partnership Network and Community Council will serve as this proposal's Community-wide Leadership Team. In addition, Manchester Proud's Community Partnerships Coordinator will serve as the lead facilitator of the Community-wide Leadership Team and assist with all aspects of project implementation, including providing connections and support for the school-based Community Schools Coordinators.

Lastly, in addition to School-Based Leadership Teams (co-led by the Principals and Community Schools Coordinators), there are nearly 15 organizational partners and supporters of this application who will serve as the Steering Committee for Manchester Community Schools. This collaborative team will be co-led by the Manchester School District and Manchester Proud. This Committee will monitor performance measures for continuous quality improvement and provide a mechanism for shared accountability and decision-making across all core partners and supporters with school administration.

b. Research-informed Service Delivery

Pipeline services will be implemented across all four pillars of the Community Schools Framework. The selected strategies are a mix of existing foundational efforts that will be expanded/enhanced and new strategies/services at Beech Street and Gossler Park.

Pillar#1: Integrated Student Supports
Pipeline Services: Social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports.
Objective: Improve the overall health and wellbeing of students to enable them to consistently engage in school and mitigate adverse childhood experiences.
<u>NEW Strategy/Service:</u> <i>Vision Screening and Eyewear Program</i>
<p><u>Strategy/Service Description:</u> Amoskeag Health, a federally qualified health center, will establish a comprehensive vision screening program via its ophthalmology services. Standard vision screenings using wall charts for visual acuity do not screen for the full spectrum of vision problems found in clinical vision services. Targeting students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), clinical services will assess students for vision problems and provide corrective eyewear as needed.</p> <p><u>Why the service was selected:</u> Beech Street and Gossler Park have higher percentages of students with IEPs at 20.1% and 27.5%, respectively. Less than 10% of students at Beech Street and Gossler Park achieve ELA proficiency in third grade. Additionally, School Principals shared that unnecessary delays in IEP development occur when families are unable to access vision services and purchase corrective eyewear. Providing better support for</p>

families in accessing vision services will directly impact the school's ability to better support students academically.

How services will improve student academic achievement: Scientific evidence shows vision problems can cause reading problems. Moreover, researchers at Ohio State University found that children with IEPs are likely to have a greater prevalence of vision-related problems than the general student population and should undergo comprehensive vision examinations to identify and treat these conditions (Fortenbacher, 2012).

How services will address annual measurable performance outcomes: % students scoring at proficient and above on standardized ELA testing

NEW Strategy/Service: Y-STAY Program

Strategy/Service Description: The Y-STAY Program (Support, Tutoring, and Adventures for Youth) is a long-standing partnership between The YMCA of Downtown Manchester, a branch of The Granite YMCA, and the Manchester School District. Y-STAY currently provides a support system for middle school students who are at risk of dropping out due to risk factors including academic learning gaps, truancy, poverty, limited opportunities, etc. This model will be newly developed for 5th grade students at Beech Street and 4th grade students at Gossler Park. Y-STAY provides students with a critical link to adult role models, new positive experiences, and a strengthened connection to learning and education.

Why the service was selected: The students at Beech Street and Gossler Park have high rates of chronic absenteeism at 22% and 16%, respectively. The neighborhoods for Beech Street and Gossler Park are among the most impoverished in the city and experience disproportionate

rates of violent crime. 3 out of every 4 students at Beech Street and Gossler Park are living in poverty, and more than 12% of the students at Beech Street are living at some level of homelessness.

How services will improve student academic achievement: Research has shown that a high-quality youth-mentor relationship is significantly associated with positive social, academic, and health-related behaviors (Sieving, 2017). Youth-adult connectedness is a foundational protective factor for adolescent health and well-being.

How services will address annual measurable performance outcomes: % improvement in rate of at least ½ day unexcused absences; % improvement in chronic absenteeism; % improvement in office discipline referral rates

EXISTING foundational strategies:

- ❖ Amoskeag Health - School-Based Health Centers: Amoskeag Health co-locates Masters-level Behavioral Health Counselors at Beech Street and Gossler Park to support the mental wellbeing of students. Additionally, four Community Health Workers provide family support services to the families of children in these elementary schools. Both partnerships were borne from initial Community Schools implementation that began in 2013. Last school year, acute care services were launched at Beech Street and Gossler Park via a Nurse Practitioner who works in partnership with the school nurse to evaluate and provide immediate access to testing and treatment for children in need of care. This enables children to spend less time out of the classroom and parents take less time off from work navigating an external health care delivery system.

As it pertains to this funding opportunity, clinic services will be expanded to include behavior screening (e.g., ADHD) and active referrals to mental health services in coordination with the district's Multi-Tiered System of Support. Additionally, physicals/immunizations required for school entry will be offered onsite to reduce school enrollment delays due to legal medical requirements and documentation. This is especially critical in Beech Street which serves a large number of English language learners who are often new arrivals as refugees and immigrants to Manchester.

- ❖ Manchester School District – Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavioral Health and Wellness Model (MTSS-B): MTSS-B is an evidence-based model that prioritizes universal social-emotional supports through a tiered prevention framework and an integrated mental health delivery system through collaborative family and community partnerships. The Manchester School District has been formerly invested in establishing the MTSS-B model since 2020, and this year, secured a [REDACTED] grant through Project AWARE at SAMSHA to bolster implementation (Tier 2 trauma interventions and family wellness sessions). A district position (MTSS-B Director) provides coaching for districtwide planning and school-based implementation. Coaching focuses on creating a preventive, sustainable framework that supports the implementation and ongoing evaluation of evidence-based practices with fidelity for school-wide and targeted interventions. The MTSS-B Director will work with Beech Street and Gossler Park to conduct school-wide fidelity assessments for MTSS-B plan creation in year one of the grant period.

Pillar#2: Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities
<p>Pipeline Services: 1. Activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness; and 2. High-quality school and out-of-school time.</p>
<p>Objective: Increase career-connected learning opportunities to foster hope for the future and inspire students to seek postsecondary education and employment.</p>
<p><u><i>NEW Strategy/Service: Career-connected learning and workforce pipeline</i></u></p>
<p><u>Strategy/Service Description:</u> Founded by world-renowned inventor, Dean Kamen, the City of Manchester is home to the Advanced Regenerative Manufacturing Institute (ARMI), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance the bioeconomy of the U.S. This year, BioFabUSA, a program of ARMI, was awarded a [REDACTED] to support lab-made human tissue and organ manufacturing. Manchester Community Schools will build on the city’s foundation of STEM excellence through a multipronged intervention focused on STEM learning and career exploration across all grade levels in Beech Street and Gossler Park. Intervention components include classroom-based STEM education via curriculum development/training for teachers (conducted by the University of New Hampshire); enhanced STEM learning through the integration of outside experts into the classroom setting, and off-site field trips to the SEE Science Center. Additionally, leaders from STEM fields, such as healthcare and biomanufacturing, will provide career spotlights in the classroom and participate in career fair opportunities. A Summer STEM Academy will be established by the 21st Century Program to provide a high-quality out-of-school time opportunity for student learning as well. Lastly, an internship pipeline for high school students at the Manchester</p>

School of Technology will be established for students interested in elementary education with a focus on STEM. Internship placements will be created at Beech Street and Gossler Park.

Why the service was selected: Students from low-income families are on average exposed to fewer career options than their more affluent peers, making it even less likely that they will enter into emerging STEM fields (eSchool News, 2019). Recent student climate surveys have shown a high level of disengagement with more than one-third of students reporting that they are “actively disengaging” from school. Moreover, 60% of students feel “stuck” or “discouraged” about the future. On-time graduation rates for Manchester students have reached an all-time low of 68%.

How services will improve student academic achievement: STEM education employs a project-based learning model that focuses on developing 21st century competencies critical for employment, including non-cognitive skills, soft skills, critical thinking, adaptability, problem-solving, oral and written communications, collaboration, creativity, responsibility, professionalism, ethics, and technology use (ACTE, 2010).

How services will address annual measurable performance outcomes: % decrease in office discipline referral rates; % increase in instructional time; % decrease in the rate of chronic absenteeism; % students scoring at proficient and above on standardized testing; % students graduating high school on time

EXISTING foundational strategies:

- ❖ NH Department of Education, 21st Century Program, and NH Learning Initiative - Out of School Time Career Pathways: In 2021, the NH Department of Education received a

█████ grant from the U.S. Department of Education to build the capacity of the Manchester School District (and 3 additional districts) to support students in completing an industry-recognized credential for remote work, STEM-related industry-recognized credentials chosen from a range approved options, and paid internships in STEM-related work-based learning opportunities with a local employer. Additionally, students in grades 6 through 8 in the district are participating in developmentally appropriate career learning opportunities. Through this initiative, the Manchester School District has established a career assessment process administered to all students at least twice during their K-12 learning journey. Manchester Proud has been contracted locally to support the procurement of community partnerships and facilitation of pathways for this initiative.

- ❖ University of New Hampshire – Play-based Kindergarten: Research has shown that children benefit in different ways from all forms of play across the continuum. Yet guided play experiences lead to the most significant learning and developmental outcomes for children. Play-based learning, specifically guided play, maintains the joy of free play while allowing children to connect authentically with content. When children co-construct their learning with their teachers and peers, they apply it to their own lives making meaningful, personal discoveries as they progress towards learning goals. Children naturally learn through play by engaging in and making sense of their world. Guided play is self-chosen, enjoyable, and process-oriented. These opportunities are experiences that are child-directed and teacher-facilitated in which teachers take an active role as intentional planners, observers, and guides. Play-based Kindergarten is currently being developed in the district, in partnership with the

University of New Hampshire. Both Beech Street and Gossler Park will be launching this approach within their respective Kindergarten programs this fall.

Pillar#3: Active Family and Community Engagement

Pipeline Services: 1. Supports for a child’s transition to elementary school and from elementary to middle school; and 2. Family and community engagement and supports.

Objective: Establish opportunity pathways that promote economic mobility and school connectedness for parents/caregivers.

NEW Strategy/Service: Family Academy Model

Strategy/Service Description: Manchester Community Schools will create a Family Academy Model for postsecondary education and career pathways for parents/caregivers and former students who attended the schools in the area served by the pipeline. Programming will include English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction for adults, onsite at each Beech Street and Gossler Park and facilitated by the International Institute of New England; direct/facilitated connection to established employment pipelines in healthcare careers (Elliot Health System’s Licensed Nursing Assistant-LNA Earn-and-Learn education program); and direct/facilitated connection to postsecondary education pathways with supportive services such as financial aid, tutoring, childcare, and career coaching (Southern NH University’s DUET program). Additionally, existing Bilingual Family Liaisons will support connections and referral to the Family Academy Model and promote parent/caregiver connectedness to school for improved navigation into/from elementary school.

Why the service was selected: Both Beech Street (71.7%) and Gossler Park (54.3%) are ‘majority minority’ schools in neighborhoods with concentrated childhood poverty (63.5% in Beech Street neighborhood area and 42.7% in Gossler Park neighborhood area).

How services will improve student academic achievement: Schools with strong family engagement are 10 times more likely to improve student learning outcomes. In one longitudinal study across 200 public elementary schools in Chicago (Bryk, 2010), researchers identified five key supports that together determined whether schools could substantially improve students’ reading and math scores: school leadership, *family and community engagement*, education personnel capacity, school learning climate, and instructional guidance. Variations in parent educational attainment, parent occupation, and family income predict large academic disparities among children from different socioeconomic backgrounds that persist over the years of schooling, perpetuating educational inequalities across generations (Davis-Keen, 2021). Building opportunity for parents/caregivers not only improves economic mobility to address poverty, but it also directly correlates with student academic achievement and healthy childhood development.

How services will address annual measurable performance outcomes: % improvement in staff and family perceptions of school climate; % improvement in parent/guardian and staff perceptions of family engagement with schools; % students scoring at proficient and above on standardized testing; % students graduating high school on time

EXISTING foundational strategies:

- ❖ Manchester School District - Bilingual Family Liaisons: Bilingual Family Liaisons are employed within the district to empower families with information and support through workshops and ongoing activities to build family strengths and facilitate their engagement in school-related home learning activities. Primary responsibilities include bridging the communication divide between schools and families by serving as interpreters and translators, including bilingual student registrations to ensure a smooth enrollment process for families with limited English proficiency and open houses and parent-teacher conferences to foster a strong sense of community and collaboration. In addition, they assist with student language assessments and conduct home visits to parents regarding their student to create meaningful connections and parental involvement.
- ❖ Amoskeag Health/Manchester Police Department - Adverse Childhood Experiences Response Team (ACERT): Informed by the evidence-based Yale-New Haven Child Development-Community Policing Program, ACERT responds to families, and especially children, in the wake of violence and connects them to appropriate trauma-informed supports and services in the community. Employing a two-pronged approach, ACERT provides trauma-informed training to first responder populations, educators, and social service agencies to foster a competent, compassionate, and effective workforce around ACEs, trauma, and mitigation, and facilitates a systematic and collaborative referral process that connects children to community partners for direct services (i.e. evidence-based therapy, recreational & Therapeutic based groups, mentor programs, etc.). Manchester Community Schools will establish a formal mechanism of

<p>communication and coordination with ACERT at Beech Street and Gossler Park to better support students and families facing ACEs.</p>
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Pillar#4: Collaborative Leadership and Practices
<p>Pipeline Services: Formal leadership and management structure engaging schools and the community at large; Utilize Professional Learning Communities to build a culture of professional learning and increase student performance.</p>
<p>Objective: Foster shared accountability and collective impact to center community schools as a foundation for teaching and learning success.</p>
<p>EXISTING foundational strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): PLCs are currently organized at both Beech Street and Gossler Park to create a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility. Research has demonstrated that when teaching staff are intentionally engaged in PLCs, collective efficacy increases and is directly correlated with increases in student achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Adams & Forsyth, 2006). ❖ Community Schools Steering Committee (Facilitated by the Manchester School District and Manchester Proud) <p>Required components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Full-Time Community Schools Coordinator at Beech Street ❖ Full-Time Community Schools Coordinator at Gossler Park

- ❖ School-Based Leadership Team at Beech Street and Gossler Park (facilitated by the School Principal and Community Schools Coordinator)
- ❖ Community-wide Leadership Team (Facilitated by Manchester Proud)

IV. Adequacy of Resources

a. Effective Coordination

Beech Street and Gossler Park will each hire a full-time, Community Schools Coordinator (CSC) who will work through school breaks and the summer months supporting pipeline services (***Job description in attachments***). Minimum requirements for the position include a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and 3-5 years of professional experience in community organizing, education, public health, or social work. The CSCs will co-facilitate the School-Based Leadership Teams, in coordination with the School Principals, to support school-specific integration of the community schools model. Primary responsibilities of the CSC position include:

- Developing positive working relationships with school staff, families, community members, and partners;
- Facilitating components of community engagement to inform pipeline service development;
- Co-leading the School-Based Leadership Team in coordination with the School Principal;
- Planning and implementing activities to connect families with pipeline services across the four pillars of the community schools framework - Integrated student supports; Expanded and enriched learning time; Active family and community engagement; and Collaborative leadership and practices to support high-quality teaching;
- Coordinating school-to-community partnerships to maintain pipeline services for students and families;
- Resource development, such as grant identification, for the sustainability of pipeline services;

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- Attending community schools meetings, training, and conferences to represent Manchester Community Schools; and
- Conducting data collection and reporting responsibilities as it pertains to the local performance evaluation, as well as participation in national evaluation efforts, as relevant.

The CSC will report to the School Principals, Kelly Newman at Beech Street and Lori Upham at Gossler Park, and have a direct connection to the district's leadership team via the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, Nicole Doherty.

- Kelly Newman, Beech Street School Principal: Ms. Newman has been employed by the Manchester School District since 2008 and has served as the School Principal of Beech Street for three years. She has a master's degree in educational leadership from New England College.
- Lori Upham, Gossler Park School Principal: Ms. Upham has been employed by the Manchester School District since 1993 and has served as the School Principal of Gossler Park for 11 years. She has a master's degree in education from Notre Dame College and is Certified as an Elementary Educator in NH. In 2016, Ms. Upham was recognized by the Granite United Way as the Advocate of the Year for school-based implementation of the Leader in Me and other community schools related programming.
- Nicole Doherty, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning: Ms. Doherty has been employed by the Manchester School District since 2019 and currently serves on the district's leadership team. She has a master's degree in education from Plymouth State University.

In addition to internal support, the CSCs will receive assistance from Manchester Proud's Community Partnerships Coordinator, Aimee Kereage. Ms. Kereage will co-facilitate the

Manchester Community Schools Steering Committee and lead the Community-wide Leadership Team. She specializes in building school-to-community partnerships. Ms. Kereage has worked in the Manchester Public Schools since 2015, having first served as a Family Success Coordinator for Manchester Community Schools through 2018. She has a master's degree in social work from the University of New Hampshire.

b. Sustainable Support

The Manchester School District is committed to continuing Manchester Community Schools at the end of Federal funding. As mentioned, the district's strategic plan identified the community schools model as a core recommendation for implementation. As such, the district has already secured grant funding through the University of New Hampshire's (UNH) Preschool Development Grant to begin planning and community engagement efforts. This award was secured prior to this funding announcement.

The UNH grant is specifically designed to assist local communities in crafting implementation plans based on the community school pillars and pipeline services. In May 2023, the Manchester School District contracted with a local consulting firm, Pear Associates, to facilitate community planning and conduct community engagement activities, including key informant interviews and community surveys. This work will occur regardless of the funding decision for this proposal. The creation of an implementation plan for pipeline services, as outlined in this proposal, will set-up Manchester for seeking additional funding sources, if necessary, to launch implementation.

The Manchester School District and its community partners have successfully secured funding sources to support the existing pipeline services at Beech Street and Gossler Park. Notable funding sources include but are not limited to: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Additional non-Federal sources of in-kind match support have been identified. Moreover, there has been a community-level investment in educational outcomes as demonstrated by Manchester Proud, which is entirely funded by private donations and state philanthropic foundations. The Manchester School District will continue to identify and secure funding through federal, state, and local sources to ensure sustainability. When possible, Manchester Community Schools will look to health reimbursement for services in school-based clinics for supporting ongoing care and look for opportunities to allocate general funds from the district's annual operating budget over the five-year duration of the funding award.

V. Quality of the Management Plan

a. Diverse Consortium


The district is the primary applicant and co-lead of this proposal with Manchester Proud. The vision and mission of the Manchester School District are directly aligned with the overarching goal of the community school framework in improving teaching, learning, and student outcomes, particularly in urban and rural areas with high rates of poverty. Our theory of action reinforces the commitment to equity by fostering inclusive, student-driven, and engaging learning experiences that promote civic, cultural, and digital competency. This approach prepares students to excel in college, careers, and life.




In addition to serving as a lead agency, the district will provide support across the four pillars, including employing a full-time, Community Schools Coordinator in each school; conducting a community engagement process to inform pipeline service delivery; expanding MTSS-B efforts to the schools; building on its existing Out of School Time Career Pathways; supporting the Family Academy Model via Bilingual Family Liaisons; providing direct facilitation of Professional Learning Communities; and serving as the lead point organization for the local performance evaluation and the national evaluation process.



The district cannot achieve its vision and mission alone and regularly works closely with a diverse consortium of community partners and stakeholders. In particular, the district has conducted its most recent strategic planning process in direct partnership with the community (Manchester Proud), embracing the opportunity for authentic engagement and collaborative leadership. Manchester Proud, a resident-driven movement, has partnered with the district since 2017 and is serving as the co-lead for Manchester Community Schools. As a non-profit corporation, Manchester Proud has an Executive Director, Community Partnerships Coordinator,

and Communications Coordinator to support its mission of “building community engagement and partnerships with the Manchester School District to champion student success and make exceptional public schools.” Manchester Proud will lead the Communitywide Leadership Team, co-lead the Steering Committee, and support the Community Schools Coordinators with facilitating school-to-community partnerships.



With leadership from the Manchester School District and Manchester Proud, five core community partners, and nine supporters have pledged their support to Manchester Community Schools. **Table 3** below details the roles and responsibilities of core partners and supporters by community school pillar.



Table 3: Manchester Consortium Partners and Supporters		
Organization	Role	Responsibilities
Pillar #1: Integrated Student Supports		
Amoskeag Health 	Core partner Personnel: <i>Betsy Burtis,</i> <i>M.Ed.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support pipeline service delivery – social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports. • Establish a vision screening program for IEP students with corrective eyewear. • Expand existing school health clinic services including acute care, immunizations, ADHD screenings, and mental health referrals. • Establish communication channels and protocols for cross-sector collaboration

		between the schools, healthcare, and law enforcement (ACERT).
Granite YMCA 	Core partner Personnel: <i>Bri Hess, MS;</i> <i>Chris Stetson,</i> <i>M.Ed.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support pipeline service delivery – social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports. • Adapt and expand evidence-based mentorship programming (Y-STAY) to the elementary grades 4 & 5.
City of Manchester Health Department 	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide connection to existing health-related, community-based programming, such as the Public Health and Safety Team; school-based dental van; refugee health services; and healthy food access programs.
Pillar #2: Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities		
SEE Science Center 	Core partner Personnel: <i>Shana</i> <i>Hawrylchak,</i> <i>MA; Rebecca</i> <i>Mayhew, BA</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support pipeline service delivery – activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness; high-quality school and out-of-school time. • Provide in-school and out-of-school STEM education opportunities to bolster career-connected learning.




		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expose teachers to project-based delivery techniques and provide teacher resources for expanding STEM integration in elementary classrooms for sustainability.
University of New Hampshire Extension 	Core partner Personnel: <i>Sarah Grosvenor, MA</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support pipeline service delivery – activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness; high-quality school and out-of-school time. Provide in-school STEM education to bolster career-connected learning. Conduct teacher training in STEM, particularly Natural Sciences and Environmental education for sustainability. Connect youth and adults to the Extension 4-H community and program opportunities.
21 st Century Program 	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career connected learning opportunities for students enrolled in programming throughout the school year and summer. STEM based programming throughout the school year and summer. Support educators in providing high level learning opportunities to students.

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<p>DEKA</p> 	<p>Supporter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiential programs to bolster STEM education, including an Experiential Robotics Program (XRP) and Made in Manchester Advance Manufacturing ELO. • Continued STEM-based experiences for elementary school students moving to middle school via the FIRST Lego League, and a commitment to work with our school's leadership to pilot new strategies to engage more students.
<p>Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce</p> 	<p>Supporter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as a meaningful bridge between the district and the business community. • Support career-connected learning opportunities and pathways.
<p>Manchester Community College</p> 	<p>Supporter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide programming and advising to support current Manchester School District students and families to pursue postsecondary education. • Offer concurrent student enrollment opportunities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support educators in providing high-level learning opportunities to students.
Pillar #3: Active Family and Community Engagement		
International Institute of New England 	Core partner Personnel: <i>Caroline Edwards, LL.M, LL.D;</i> <i>Hannah Jean, MSW;</i> <i>Kayla Rossmeisel, MS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support pipeline service delivery – family and community engagement; activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness. Provide ESOL classes to build community trust in the schools and teach parents skills for engaging with the school and workforce pipeline partners.
Elliot Health System 	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to established Apprenticeship Programs for adults and high school graduates. Support for career exploration activities, such as guest presenters and student internship opportunities for exposure to the healthcare field. Connection to health services, as needed, in support of the school-based health clinics.

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Granite United Way 	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging business partnerships to bring in additional resources including volunteers, mentors, and sponsors. • Convening and providing resources for agency partnerships to enhance school programming and partnerships. • Connection to resources for families via 211 and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance.
Partners for Rural Impact 	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners for Rural Impact pledges to align its existing strategies with the district's plan, including a Statewide Family Engagement Center and an AmeriCorps program.
Southern NH University 	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to the ESL Provider Network for the purpose of supporting onsite ESL learning opportunities for the Family Academy. • Pathways to postsecondary education with the goal of increasing degree completion while supporting family needs.

Resumes for all key personnel from core partner organizations can be found in the attachments.

b. History of Effectiveness

The Manchester School District has a long history of effective partnerships with key community organizations and families. As it pertains to Manchester Community Schools, early

underpinnings of the model began more than a decade ago with a community health improvement plan known as the Neighborhood Health Improvement Strategy. The plan was created by the City of Manchester Health Department in partnership with local organizations and through community input from an extensive community engagement process which included door-to-door neighborhood canvassing. The goal of the NHIS was focused on place-based changes to create healthy neighborhoods, making healthy choices the easy choice for all residents. As a community action plan, the NHIS provided recommendations to maximize the impact of funding, increase resource sharing and partnerships for the greater good, and serve as a “roadmap to health” for the City’s children, families, and neighborhoods.

The Manchester School District was an active partner in NHIS plan resulting in the beginning of Manchester Community Schools. Since 2012, Beech Street and Gossler Park have been utilizing the community schools approach in order to establish neighborhood hubs that connect neighbors with one another and to needed services during weekday evenings, weekends and summer months. Initial approaches included educational opportunities for residents of all ages, linkages to physical and mental health services, and access to social services from food and housing through community care coordination via Community Health Workers. Leadership training, adult financial literacy, HiSET/GED education, parent/caregiver workshops, health screenings, and community block parties were also among the types of services organized through the schools. Results from these services included significant improvements in the rates of chronic absenteeism (45% to 18% at Beech Street). Programming was funded by a grant from the U.S. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Granite United Way, and other local philanthropic foundations in NH.

In 2016, the City of Manchester received national recognition for its partnerships to build a culture of health as one of seven winners of the RWJF Culture of Health Prize awarded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation’s largest philanthropy devoted solely to health. The prize honors communities for their efforts to ensure all residents have the opportunity to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives. The city was chosen from a group of nearly 200 applicants across the country. The award was in recognition of the city’s ability to collaborate with funders and community partners to address complex problems in new ways.

Today, Manchester continues its excellence in meaningful partnerships as demonstrated by continued federal, state, and local investments in innovative efforts to build systemic change, such as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, response teams designed to address Adverse Childhood Experiences, and career-connected learning opportunities in cutting-edge biomanufacturing and healthcare. Currently, the Manchester School District and Manchester Proud have a grant from the University of New Hampshire to conduct local planning and partnership efforts for community schools in response to the recommendation within the district’s strategic plan to further prioritize and build on this approach for student success.

c. Defined Management Plan

The Manchester School District and Manchester Proud will organize community partners and engage staff/teachers and families via formalized collaborative leadership structures and practices.

- Manchester Community Schools Steering Committee: This group will assemble bimonthly and be co-facilitated by the Manchester School District and Manchester Proud. Group membership will include all core partner and supporter organizations, along with school leadership from Beech Street and Gossler Park. The mission of this group is to

coordinate and monitor program performance at both schools, ensuring grant deliverables are achieved as planned. The independent evaluator, Behavioral Health Improvement Institute (BHII) at Keene State College, will also participate in this group.

- School-Based Leadership Teams: Each school will have an established leadership team composed of frontlines staff from core partner organizations, staff/teachers, and families/caregivers to guide the implementation of pipeline services across the four pillars. This group will be co-facilitated by the Community Schools Coordinator and the School Principal. Meetings will be held weekly initially until services are underway.
- Community-Wide Leadership Team: The existing Community Partnerships Network organized by Manchester Proud will be utilized as the Community-Wide Leadership Team to support initial planning and ongoing community engagement efforts and align resources for sustainability. Meetings are held monthly.



District Expertise. In addition to a collaborative leadership structure, the Manchester School District has several existing internal positions that will support the Community Schools Coordinators and partner organizations in implementation:

- ❖ Tina Philibotte, Chief Equity Officer, Manchester School District – Ms. Philibotte has been employed by the district since 2021 to lead its efforts to advance equity and build a culture of belonging for all students, families, employees, and community. She has a master’s degree in English education from Plymouth State University and is a current doctoral candidate at Boston University. Ms. Philibotte most recently received a 2022 Excellence in Education Award from the NAACP.
- ❖ Wendy Perron, Executive Director of English Learner Instruction, Manchester School District – Ms. Perron has worked in various roles for the district since 2001 with a focus on English language learners and their families. She has a master’s degree in education from the University of New Hampshire and most recently received a 2019 Community Partner Award from Saint Anselm’s College, Melia Center for Community Engagement.
- ❖ Jillian Corey, Curriculum Director, Manchester School District – Ms. Corey has been employed by the district since 2007. She leads the district’s Out of School Time Career Pathways program. Ms. Corey has a master’s degree in education from Plymouth State University and has a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Leading and Learning in a Competency-Based System from Southern NH University.
- ❖ Jessica DuBois, District Attendance Coordinator, Manchester School District – Ms. DuBois has been hired for this new position in the district which will focus on providing resources to students and families to overcome barriers that keep them from attending school regularly. During this upcoming school year, a new attendance campaign (“Show

Up Manchester”) is being launched to engage the community in addressing chronic absenteeism. Ms. DuBois has a master’s degree in special education from Grand Canyon University.

- ❖ Donna Crook, Data Analyst, Manchester School District – Ms. Crook has been employed by the district since 2009 and will interface with the evaluation teams for performance monitoring and measurement. She has a dual appointment with Southern NH University as their Director of Accountability and Research since 2011. Ms. Crook has a master’s degree in mathematics from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Full resumes for key personnel and core partners can be found in the attachments.

Work Plan. Project management activities are organized under three phases – 1. Planning and Community Engagement; 2. Pipeline Services Implementation; and 3. Performance Measurement and Evaluation. The primary activities and benchmarks within the phases are not necessarily sequential and will occur concurrently. *Table 4* outlines the phases, activities, timeframes, milestones, and responsible entity and/or position.

Table 4: Manchester Community Schools Work Plan				
Phase	Activities	Timeframe	Milestone(s)	Organization/ Key Personnel
Planning and Community Engagement	Secure BOSC approval of grant contract to accept the award	Y1, Q1: January- February 2024	Signed contracted with U.S. DOE	Manchester School District

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	Draft/execute core partner contracts and finalize MOU	Y1, Q1: March 2024	Signed contracts with core partners; Finalized/signed MOU	Manchester School District; Manchester Proud; Amoskeag Health; Granite YMCA; International Institute of New England; SEE Science Center; UNH Extension; BHII (Evaluator)
	Kickoff - Steering Committee	Y1, Q2: April 2024	Review and agreement on initial next steps for the first year of the project	Manchester School District (Nicole Doherty); Manchester Proud (Aimee Kereage)
	Hire two, 1.0FTE Community	Y1, Q1/Q2: March 2024- June 2024	1.0FTE Community Schools Coordinator at	Manchester School District

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	Schools Coordinators		Beech Street; 1.0FTE Community Schools Coordinator at Gossler Park	
	Finalize community engagement plan	Y1, Q1: April 2024	Community engagement plan with outreach strategies and responsible entities	Steering Committee
	Conduct community engagement process – data review, interviews, surveys, listening sessions, analysis	Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024- December 2024	Data review summary; survey tool; interview tool; listening session guide; qualitative analysis summary	Community Schools Coordinator, BHII, Manchester Proud

Pillar #1: Integrated Student Supports				
Objective: Improve the overall health and wellbeing of students to enable them to consistently engage in school and mitigate adverse childhood experiences.				
Phase	Activities	Timeframe	Milestone(s)	Organization/ Key Personnel
Pipeline Services Implementation – Social health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports.	Design vision screening program	Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024- December 2024	Established clinic workflows;	Amoskeag Health
	Create enrollment forms/ process including parental consent and communication mechanisms	Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024- December 2024	Parental consent form; results screening sheet; defined clinic/staff roles	Amoskeag Health; Manchester School District
	Identify IEP students and conduct referrals	Annually from Y2, Q1: January 2025-	Student caseload	Beech Street, Gossler Park; Community

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		December 2028		Schools Coordinators
	Implement strategies for barrier resolution, such as transportation and access to eyewear	Ongoing from Y2, Q1: January 2025-December 2028	Available appointment schedule; Consistent appointment completion rate; corrective eyewear for students as indicated	Amoskeag Health; Community Schools Coordinators
	Y-STAY- curriculum development for 4 th and 5 th grade	Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024-December 2024	Curriculum for 4 th grade students; Curriculum for 5 th grade students	Granite YMCA
	Y-STAY- in-school protocol and procedures are defined, including parental consent	Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024-December 2024	Drafted Y-STAY protocols/ procedures; enrollment/parental consent forms	Granite YMCA; Beech Street; Gossler Park; Community Schools Coordinators

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	Implement Y-STAY program at Beech Street and Gossler Park	Annually from Y2: January 2025-December 2028	Students assigned to mentors	Granite YMCA; Beech Street; Gossler Park; Community Schools Coordinators
	MTSS-B fidelity assessments completed	Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024-December 2024	Completed Fidelity tools	Manchester School District (Stacy Champey)
	Create school-specific implementation plans	Y2, Q1/Q2: January 2025-June 2025	MTSS-B plan for Beech Street; MTSS-B plan for Gossler Park	Manchester School District (Stacy Champey); Beech Street; Gossler Park
	Implement tiered services based on school-specific implementation plan	Ongoing from Y2, Q3 (September 2025)	Tiered services; family engagement	Beech Street; Gossler Park; Community Schools Coordinators

Pillar #2: Expanded and enriched learning time				
Objective: Increase career-connected learning opportunities to foster hope for the future and inspire students to seek postsecondary education and employment.				
Phase	Activities	Timeframe	Milestone(s)	Organization/ Key Personnel
Pipeline Services Implementation – 1. Activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness; and 2. High-quality school and out-of-school time.	Develop curriculum for in-classroom STEM learning	Y1, Q3/Q4: June 2024-December 2024	Grade level appropriate curriculum	UNH Extension
	Grade 2 program developed at SEE Science Center	Y1, Q3/Q4	Established program for 2nd grade students	SEE Science Center
	Implement in-classroom educational programming and teacher training	Annually from Y2: January 2025-December 2028	Train the trainer conducted; Curriculum taught in all classroom grades 3-5	UNH Extension; SEE Science Center; Beech Street; Gossler Park
	Organizing and coordinating the	Y1, Q3/Q4: June 2024-	Visit schedule established; bus	SEE Science Center; Beech

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	logistics for STEM Out of School Time Experiences	December 2024	transportation secured; parental consent secured	Street; Gossler Park; Community Schools Coordinators
	Conducting student visits to SEE Science Center	Annually from Y2: January 2025- December 2028	Field trips for grades K-3	SEE Science Center; Beech Street; Gossler Park; Community Schools Coordinators
	Host a Summer STEM Academy for students	Annually from Y1 in Q3 from July 2024- September 2028	Summer program for students K-5	21 st Century Program; Community Schools Coordinator
	Create High School Internships at Beech Street and Gossler Park	Annually from Y2 in Q2 from April 2025- June 2028	Internship spots	Community Schools Coordinators; Manchester Proud

Pillar #3: Active family and community engagement				
Objective: Establish opportunity pathways that promote economic mobility and school connectedness for parents/caregivers.				
Phase	Activities	Timeframe	Milestone(s)	Organization/ Key Personnel
	Proactive parental outreach and education to support school connections	Ongoing from Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024-December 2028	Education sessions; individual case coordination; parent nights	Community Schools Coordinators; Manchester School District (Bilingual Family Liaisons)
Pipeline Services Implementation – 1. Supports for a child’s transition to elementary school and from	Conduct ESOL classes twice per week at both schools, including advertising to families	Ongoing from Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024-December 2028	2 ESOL classes per week at Beech Street; 2 ESOL classes per week at Gossler Park	International Institute of New England; Community School Coordinators
	Identify postsecondary	Ongoing from Y1, Q3/Q4:	At least two pathways	Southern NH University;

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elementary to middle school; and 2. Family and community engagement and supports.	pathways with supportive services for adults	July 2024-December 2028	established; Adult enrollment rate in postsecondary education	Manchester Community College; Community Schools Coordinators; Manchester Proud
	Identify employment pathways with support services for adults	Ongoing from Y1, Q3/Q4: July 2024-December 2028	At least two employment pathways established	Manchester Community College; Elliot Health System; ARMI/DEKA; Community Schools Coordinators; Manchester Proud
	Establish formal protocols and communication mechanisms	Ongoing from Y1, Q2/Q3: July 2024-	Communication protocols; parental release forms/ process	Amoskeag Health; Community Schools

	between ACERT and Beech Street and Gossler Park	December 2028		Coordinators; Beech Street; Gossler Park
Pillar #4: Collaborative Leadership and Practices Objective: Foster shared accountability and collective impact to center community schools as a foundation for teaching and learning success.				
Phase	Activities	Timeframe	Milestone(s)	Organization/ Key Personnel
Pipeline Services Implementation – Formal leadership and management structure engaging schools and the community at large; Utilize Professional Learning	School-Based Leadership Teams	Ongoing from Y1, Q2	Weekly meetings	Community Schools Coordinators; Beech Street (Principal); Gossler Park (Principal)
	Community- Wide Leadership Team	Ongoing from Y1, Q2	Monthly meetings	Manchester Proud (Aimee Kereage); Community Schools Coordinators

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Communities to build a culture of professional learning and increase student performance.	Conduct Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for staff/teachers at Beech Street and Gossler Park	Ongoing from Y1, Q3 (June 2024)	Weekly PLCs	Manchester School District; Beech Street; Gossler Park
Phase	Activities	Timeframe	Milestone(s)	Organization/ Key Personnel
Performance Measurement and Evaluation	Finalize evaluation plan for performance measurement	Y1, Q3	Final evaluation plan	BHII (evaluator)
	Establish data collection systems and protocols	Y1, Q4	Quickbase platform created; data collection training conducted	BHII (evaluator)
	Review performance measures for	Ongoing from Y2 (January 2025-	Metrics dashboard; service quality reviews	BHII; Steering Committee

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	continuous quality improvement	December 2028)		
	Conduct annual reporting and publicly sharing results	Annually in Q1 of subsequent year	Written annual reports; listing of public share locations/press releases	BHII; Manchester School District; Manchester Proud
	Participate in the national evaluation process	Ongoing	n/a	n/a

VI. Quality of the Project Evaluation

a. Experienced Evaluation Team

The Behavioral Health Improvement Institute (BHII) at Keene State College will serve as the external evaluator for the Manchester Community Schools. BHII works shoulder-to-shoulder with community partners to improve community and behavioral health practices and outcomes for underserved populations. BHII improves practice through program evaluation; infusion of behavioral health expertise in schools, primary care, and other settings; and trauma sensitivity training in communities, mental health centers, and schools.

BHII has served as an external evaluator/facilitator for over 50 behavioral health projects. We have evaluated efforts across projects to improve early childhood outcomes; school climate, trauma-responsiveness, and behavioral health service delivery in schools; and social-emotional and mental health outcomes for high-need students. All of these projects involve the implementation of multi-tiered systems of support for behavioral health and wellness in public schools and early childhood settings. Across projects, we have worked with 17 school districts, 47 schools, and 16 early childhood settings in underserved, impoverished areas of northern New England. We have served as external evaluators for statewide and regional system of care projects designed to better serve youth with severe emotional disturbance and their families.

More specifically, BHII has served as the external evaluator for several early childhood and community-based projects in Manchester, including Manchester's System of Care grant, LAUNCH Manchester, Manchester's ACERT program, and Manchester's Ready, Set, Launch home visiting program. Dr. Megan Phillips, BHII's project director for the NH MTSS-B Technical Assistance Center, a collaboration between BHII and the NH Department of Education, has also served as a technical assistance provider to the Manchester School District's

internal MTSS-B coach. As such, BHII leadership and staff are quite knowledgeable about the scope of needs, current services, project partners, and community resources in the city and school district.

Megan Phillips, PsyD will serve as lead evaluator for the project. Phillips is the lead evaluator for all of BHII's school-based projects. She has content expertise in behavioral health; mental health promotion, prevention, and treatment; utilization-focused evaluation design; and quantitative and qualitative research. Her current evaluation and technical assistance work focuses on preschool and school-based social-emotional learning and behavioral health, including the development and dissemination of NH's MTSS-B Framework. Phillips will develop the evaluation plan; liaise with project leadership; participate in the School-based Leadership Teams; supervise, project-related BHII staff, and assume responsibility for all evaluation reports and deliverables.

Michelle Graham, MPH will serve as evaluator for the project. Graham will liaise, train, and support project stakeholders; operationalize and implement the project plan on a day-to-day basis; conduct data integrity checks and facilitate the use of data; and provide project coordination functions. Graham will also participate in the School-based Leadership Teams. Graham has considerable experience evaluating public health and school-based programs, as well as extensive professional experience in Manchester's public health system, so is well-positioned to navigate stakeholder relationships as part of the evaluation.

Lisa Dotson, MSW, will serve as the data analyst. Dotson has served in this role for all of BHII's school-based evaluation projects. She will support data collection, management, and visualization; prepare data dashboards; and contribute to project reporting.

Dawn Miller, PhD is a BHII database programmer and will develop and maintain the cloud-based Community Schools QuickBase data collection platform.

b. Thorough and Feasible Evaluation Methods

The performance measurement plan will focus on (1) monitoring the number and percentage of students and families targeted for and receiving various pipeline services during each year of the project period; (2) infrastructure measures including teacher certification, school spending, leadership and practice strategies, community partner convening, and team development, among others; (3) fidelity of overarching prevention frameworks including MTSS-B and ACERT; and (4) school- and student-level outcomes. See **Table 5** below for an overview of the quantitative performance measurement plan.

Table 5: Performance Measurement Plan

Measure			Data source/tool	Person responsible	Frequency
Process measures					
1	Integrated student supports	#/% students/families referred to and receiving vision program services	QuickBase pipeline service tracking module	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing
		#/% students/families referred to and receiving Y-STAY program services			

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		#/% students/families referred to and receiving school-based health clinic services			
		#/% students/families referred to and receiving food pantry services			
2	Expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities	#/% teachers receiving STEM training	QuickBase pipeline service tracking module	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing
		#/% students referred to and receiving STEM education supports			
		#/% students engaged in science/tech internships			
3	Family and community engagement efforts	#/% students/families referred for and receiving school transition/connectedness services from Bilingual Family Liaisons	QuickBase pipeline service tracking module	Bilingual Family Liaisons	Ongoing

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		#/% students/families referred to and receiving Family Academy Model Postsecondary & Career Pathways services		Community School Coordinator	
4	Collaborative leadership and practice strategies to support high-quality learning	#/roles of members of community-wide leadership teams	QuickBase leadership module	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing
		#/roles of members of school-based leadership teams			
		#/type of community school steering committee, professional learning communities			
		#/type of additional, integrated school/community teams focused on specific, identified needs/assets development			

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		# team meetings/convenings engaging various initiative-level partners			
5	MTSS-B fidelity/quality	% MTSS-B implementation fidelity score	NH MTSS- B Fidelity Inventory	MTSS-B coach/team	Annually
6	ACERT fidelity/quality	% ACERT implementation fidelity score	ACERT Fidelity Inventory	ACERT team	Annually
7	Quality of pipeline services	Implementation quality ratings of select, new pipeline services (e.g., Y- STAY program, vision services, STEM education, Family Academy model)	Intervention Quality Tool	School staff	Annually
8	School transition	#/types of kindergarten/Gr 1-3 transition support practices	QuickBase school transition module	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing

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9	School spending	% change in school fiscal resources used to support student/family needs targeted by pipeline services	School records	Community School Coordinator	Annually
10	School staff qualifications/retention	#/% fully certified teachers, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	School records	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing
		Teacher turnover rate	School records		Annually
Outcome measures					
11	School climate	% improvement in staff and family perceptions of school climate	School Climate Survey	BHII Evaluator	Annually
12	Family engagement	% improvement in parent/guardian and staff perceptions of family engagement with schools	Family engagement items added to School Climate Survey	BHII Evaluator	Annually

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13	Behavior	% improvement in office discipline referral (ODR) rates	School records	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing
		% decrease, in- & out- of school suspension rates	School records	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing
		% decrease in expulsions	School records	Community School Coordinator	Ongoing
14	Attendance & Academic course completion	% improvement in #/% of children ready for kindergarten	DIBELS, ASQ:SE	School staff (DIBELS) and family/caregivers (ASQ:SE)	Annually at K reg.
		% improvement in rate of at least ½ day unexcused absences	School records	Community School Coordinator	Annually
		% improvement in # students with at least one	School records	Community School Coordinator	Annually

		truancy (10+ at least ½ day unexcused absences)			
		% increase in student instructional time	Based on ODR rates	Calculated by BHII Evaluator	Annually
		% students scoring at proficient and above on standardized testing	School records	Community School Coordinator	Annually
		% students graduating high school on time	School records	Community School Coordinator	Annually

c. Reliable Performance Measures and Outcomes

Process Measures. Process measures 1-3 track the pipeline supports and services targeted and delivered to each student/family, as well as each student/family’s receipt of those services and supports. These data will be collected by the Community Schools Coordinator and entered into our QuickBase data collection platform. These data include the number of students/families identified for and receiving both existing and new pipeline services in the areas of integrated student supports, expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities, and family and community engagement activities.

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Process measure 4 monitors collaborative leadership and practice strategies implemented to support high-quality learning. This includes the number, type, membership, and meeting frequency of the community-wide and school-based leadership teams, as well as the Steering Committee, professional learning communities, and other working teams focused on specific issues identified in the needs and assets assessments. This measure includes the frequency of meetings/convenings engaging initiative-level partners (e.g., LEA representatives, city/county officials, nonprofit service providers, academic partners, local businesses, healthcare organizations, advocates, etc.).

Process measures 5-7 measure the fidelity of overarching MTSS-B and ACERT frameworks, as well as the quality of selected, new pipeline services. Fidelity has to do with the degree to which a practice is implemented in a way that is faithful to the guiding model. Assessing fidelity helps prevent unintentional drift and helps make sense of project outcomes. We will monitor the fidelity of MTSS-B with the NH MTSS-B Fidelity Inventory (NH-MFI), and ACERT fidelity with the ACERT Fidelity Inventory, both tools previously developed by BHII. We will also monitor the implementation quality of selected new pipeline services (e.g., Y-STAY program, vision services, STEM education, Family Academy model) using BHII's existing Intervention Quality Tool, where feasible.

Process measure 8 will track the implementation and delivery (number and type) of practices to support the school transition of students from preschool and other early learning settings into kindergarten and grades 1-3.

Process measure 9 monitors school spending, including any changes in school fiscal resources used to support student/family needs addressed by pipeline services over time.

Process measure 10 tracks school staff qualifications and retention, including the number and percent of fully certified teachers, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, as well as the annual teacher turnover rate.

Outcome Measures. The first two outcome measures – school climate and family engagement – will be assessed using the School Climate Survey, which measures staff and family perceptions of school climate. While the tool also measures student perceptions of school climate, due to a NH law requiring active parent/guardian opt-in for non-academic student surveys, response rates are typically too low to make the student version a feasible data source. The surveys are anonymous and administered via online survey links to the school and family community on an annual basis. The core survey items come from the *School Climate Survey Suite* published by the OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports to measure aspects of school climate such as the learning environment, peer and staff relations, parent involvement, and school safety, among others. The survey also includes additional items developed by BHII to measure aspects of school climate specific to family engagement. The School Climate Survey is administered annually to provide an initial baseline assessment and identify areas for quality improvement that can be monitored over time.

Outcome measure 13 tracks student discipline rates, including office discipline referrals, in- and out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions. Ideally, as students are provided with integrated supports to promote their overall wellness, we would see these rates decrease over time. These measures are tracked in an ongoing manner by school personnel in the district's electronic data system known as ASPEN and will be analyzed and reported on an annual basis.

Outcome measure 14 tracks indicators that promote or interfere with student instructional time and achievement. These include kindergarten readiness, which will be measured using a combination of an academic readiness measure (DIBELS) and the ASQ-3:SE; chronic absenteeism and truancy rates; an overall measure of instructional time gained/lost, calculated by the BHII evaluation team based on office discipline referral and suspension rates; changes in student achievement as measured by standardized tests; and the on-time high school completion rate. These are measured on an annual basis and reported to BHII in Quickbase via Community School Coordinators who will pull the data from their school information systems.

Finally, we will enhance the evaluation plan with qualitative data. We will conduct key respondent interviews annually to augment the quantitative performance measures. The interviews will focus on the experience of an array of stakeholders as they implement the program. Thematic analysis will be used to surface key lessons learned and the next steps to improve implementation from the interview data. Together, the quantitative and qualitative data will provide a rich and comprehensive picture of project performance.

d. Continuous Quality Assurance and Improvement

Data Management. The locus of data collection/extraction will be the Community School Coordinator in each school, with support, training, and technical assistance from the BHII team. Regardless of the original data source, the majority of performance measures will eventually be entered by Coordinators into a custom-built QuickBase app. QuickBase is a “cloud-based” database system designed specifically for this type of application and will enable program staff to securely enter, store, and share data at the level befitting their role. QuickBase provides HIPAA- and FERPA-compliant encryption and security and the ability to configure multiple levels of access for various partners. As such, the QuickBase platform will allow us to collect

and store school, student, and family data in a secure, confidential fashion. QuickBase includes data dashboards for the Community School Coordinators, to allow for real-time feedback and course corrections for continuous quality improvement (CQI). A fuller description of QuickBase privacy and security protections is available at <https://www.QuickBase.com/security-and-compliance>.

Annual Evaluation and Performance Assessment. BHII will conduct both ongoing and annual performance assessment/evaluation to determine the degree to which students and families are receiving the intended services and supports, whether those services and supports are high quality, the development progress of infrastructure supports (leadership strategies, teams, etc.), and the degree to which students are demonstrating positive outcomes. The annual performance assessment will be used to refine and improve activities carried out under the grant and the annual measurable achievement objectives and outcomes. In addition, the annual evaluation report will address the following questions, as well as others based on local learning needs:

- ***Monitor implementation of, and deviations from, the project plan.*** BHII will monitor the implementation of the project plan, conducting root cause analysis to understand deviations on an annual basis. When deviations from the program plan are detected, they will be brought to the attention of the appropriate program staff. We will help those program staff understand the deviation and “root causes.” With help from the evaluators, the program staff will determine the best course of action.
- ***Detect and eliminate disparities in service access/outcomes.*** We will detect and support project stakeholders to eliminate disparities with special attention to subpopulations identified as being at high risk. When disparities are detected, we will work with program staff to understand insofar as possible the root causes of the disparity, and to use

evidence-based strategies to address and eliminate it. Disparities, and attempts to eliminate them, will be reported.

Project Monitoring and Quality. Dashboards of all performance measures will be developed and disseminated in real-time to front-line staff (e.g., Community School Coordinators) using QuickBase, and to extended audiences (e.g., leadership teams) via data visualizations and dashboards on at least a quarterly basis. BHII will facilitate data utilization, data-based decision-making, and CQI cycles during monthly evaluation meetings with project stakeholders. Evaluation will be a standing agenda item in project meetings in order to highlight trends, examine process and outcome variations over time, and strategically prioritize CQI opportunities. BHII will feed back formative findings using intuitive visuals, facilitate understanding of the data, help identify targets and evidence-based strategies to promote quality improvement, and evaluate the effects of those efforts over time. These strategies will provide routine mechanisms for informing project leadership and stakeholders about evaluation implementation and project performance.

Reporting. Evaluation will be a standing item on the School-Based Leadership Teams agenda, and BHII evaluators will attend and facilitate reporting, dissemination, and learning from ongoing process and outcome evaluation data. BHII will develop project reports for the wider school and local community. BHII will contribute to all project reporting as required by the funder in their reporting platform and in the form of annual and other required reports. The annual evaluation will be made publicly available, including public notifications of the availability of such results.

VII. **Competitive Priority Preference #1: Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs**

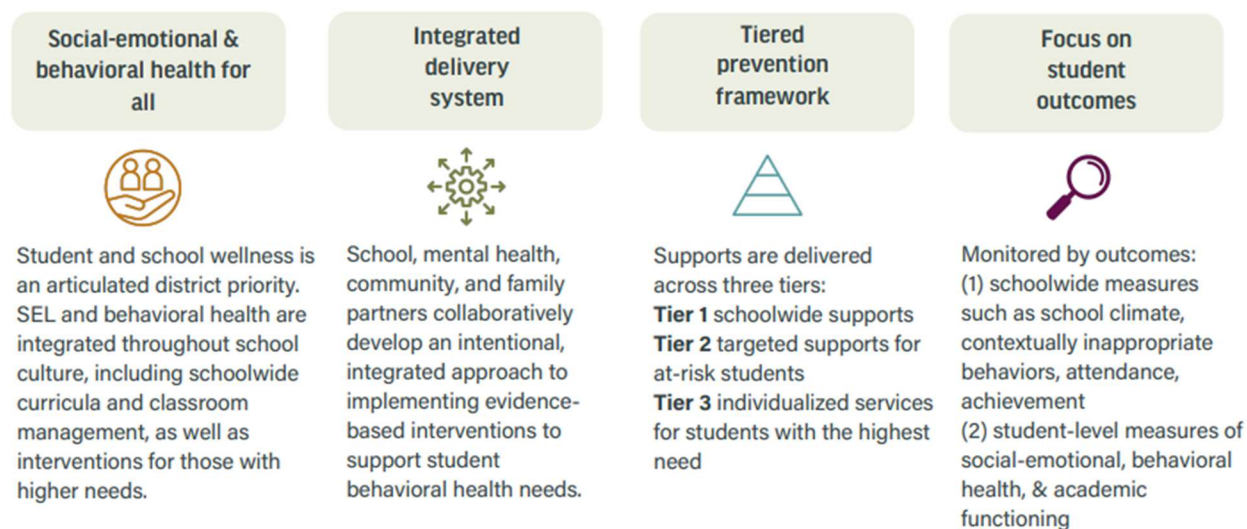
*Manchester Community Schools achieves **Competitive Priority Preference #1** by providing multi-tiered systems of supports that enable healthy development and respond to students' needs, including evidence-based trauma-informed practices and professional development for educators on avoiding deficit-based approaches.*

The need for social-emotional, mental, and behavioral health supports for youth is clear: 13% - 20% of U.S. children meet criteria for a mental health disorder and 5% of adolescents meet criteria for a substance use disorder. Of these, only 12% receive any services to address mental health and/or substance use concerns (Hoover, 2019). Without treatment, children with mental health disorders are at greater risk of negative outcomes including substance use, risky sexual behavior, violence, and more severe mental health difficulties (University of Maryland, 2013). The school dropout rate for students with severe emotional and behavioral needs is approximately twice that of other students.

Engagement in learning requires a host of skills across social, emotional, and behavioral domains, including self-regulation and behavioral inhibition, emotion regulation, and goal-directed activity. Interpersonal skills are crucial to the creation and maintenance of positive relationships with teachers and peers within the school community, and underlying emotional states need to support attention and commitment to achievement (Durlak, 2011). Children who have been exposed to trauma or who have pre-existing mental health concerns are particularly vulnerable – though all students, universally, need well-developed social emotional competencies to support attention to learning (Zins, 2004).

In response to these needs, Manchester’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Behavioral Health and Wellness (MTSS-B) was designed as a comprehensive system of social, emotional, and behavioral supports to promote student wellness and engagement in learning. MTSS-B blends research-based school mental health practices and social emotional learning with an evidence-based tiered prevention framework (based on the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports model). **Figure 9** provides an overview of core features. MTSS-B offers schoolwide social-emotional and behavioral programs at the universal level (Tier 1), targeted supports for at-risk students (Tier 2), and intensive, individualized services for the highest-need students (Tier 3). MTSS-B’s central focus on social-emotional learning promotes the healthy development and academic achievement of students and its additional emphasis on integrated school-community mental health partnerships is foundational to school mental health models (Splett, 2020).

Figure 9
 Core features



An integrated delivery system is a core feature of MTSS-B, where school, mental health, community, and family partners collaboratively develop an intentional, integrated approach to choosing and implementing evidence-based interventions to support student behavioral health

needs. MTSS-B can provide a useful structure to help school teams proactively organize their efforts to engage with families. When families contribute to decisions about student intervention and treatment, educators may be more successful in planning and delivering productive supports. Furthermore, involving families in decision-making allows them to take a more active role in supporting their student's learning and behavior at home. Families can create alignment between school and home by reinforcing school routines, expectations, and language in a home setting, which can contribute to improved student outcomes (Weingarten, 2020).

In Year One of the grant period, Beech Street and Gossler Park will conduct an initial fidelity assessment to identify opportunities for strengthening MTSS-B efforts within the schools. Currently, Amoskeag Health provides mental health services through an on-site, Behavioral Health Counselor (BHC) who is embedded in the schools full-time. Each school has one dedicated BHC to provide school-based counseling for students. Additionally, Beech Street is working closely with the Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester to co-facilitate small group trauma interventions known as Bounce Back. Through a newly secured Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant, Family Wellness Sessions will also be conducted in the schools to educate families on mental health and trauma, address stigma specifically among underrepresented groups, and connect families to services to improve access. The findings from MTSS-B fidelity assessments will be utilized to create school-based implementation plans that further develop Tier 2 & 3 supports.

VIII. **Competitive Priority Preference #2: *Strengthening Cross-Agency Coordination and Community Engagement to Advance Systemic Change***

*Manchester Community Schools achieves **Competitive Priority Preference #2** by coordinating efforts with healthcare and law enforcement for systemic change that addresses student trauma from violence and other Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).*

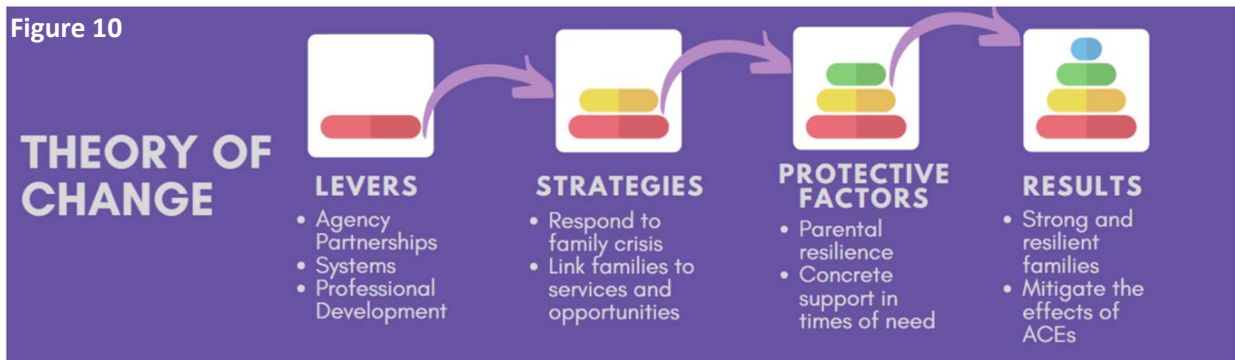
ACEs are incidents or exposures to events or situations that have the potential to cause long-term negative impact on individuals, both in childhood and adulthood (CDC). In a study published in 1998, over 17,000 adult patients of Kaiser Permanente, a major healthcare organization in California, completed confidential ACE surveys asking questions about past history of abuse, neglect, and family dysfunction, as well as links to risk factors and current adult health status, mental health, and quality of life (CDC, 2012). Results of the study demonstrated how traumatic childhood experiences are a predictor of long-term health, behavioral, and social problems.

The higher the ACE score, the greater prevalence of negative health and behavioral outcomes in adolescence and adulthood. The study uncovered that physical and mental health conditions along with quality-of-life factors suggest adults who reported a higher numbers of ACEs in their childhood, also had a higher likelihood of mental health struggles (e.g., depression, anxiety, PTSD), diseases (e.g., HIV, cancer, diabetes, lung disease), and engaged in risky behaviors (i.e., alcohol and drug abuse, unsafe sex, absenteeism).

In 2015, representatives of the Manchester Police Department came together to share concerns about leaving children in homes following traumatic events without supports or resources, while adults involved in incidences were referred to appropriate services, such as a domestic violence advocate. In examining Manchester police data, the Manchester Police

Department revealed that more than 400 children had been exposed to violence in 2014. Aside from making calls to the local child welfare agency for suspected neglect and abuse, officers did not have resources to offer families and children who were traumatized through their exposure to the events that precipitated police calls for service, and were concerned that the cycle of violence, victimization, and crime would perpetuate in the family without support.

Informed by the evidence-based, Yale-New Haven Child Development-Community Policing Program, the Police Department partnered with Amoskeag Health, Project LAUNCH - Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health, and the YWCA-NH to create the Adverse Childhood Experiences Response Team (ACERT). Using a trauma-informed approach, ACERT addresses the emotional and physical needs of children following first responder calls and ensures that they have access to services to reduce trauma and encourage healthy development (*Figure 10*).



ACERT takes a combined intervention and prevention approach to addressing children's mental, behavioral, emotional, and physical health through targeting families who have had documented incidences with law enforcement or other first responder interventions. The team connects with families to offer support and education around trauma and ACEs to encourage connection to local social supports.

The physical presence of the ACERT team in the community encourages residents to consider law enforcement as ‘helpers’ and further forges an embedded connection between law enforcement and community agencies that often work closely with the same residents. Engaging with families in their own homes also promotes trust and care during difficult times. The work focuses on two strength-based approaches:

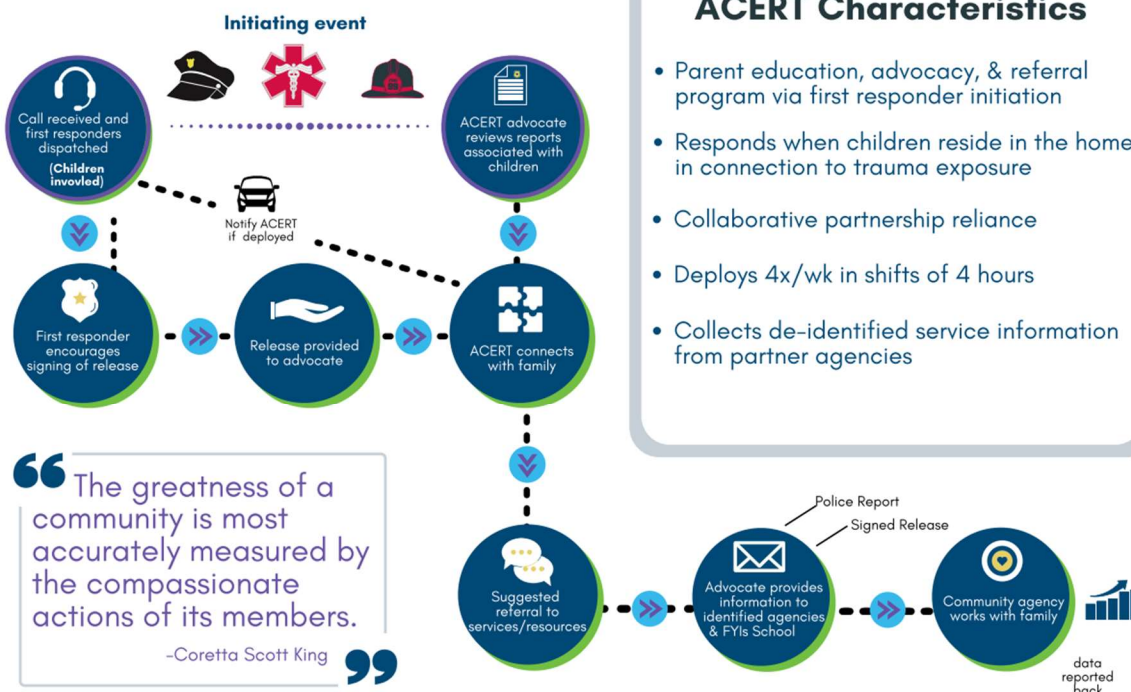
- Trauma-informed training to first responder populations, school staff/teachers, and social service agencies to foster a competent, compassionate, and effective workforce around ACEs, trauma, and mitigation; and
- Implementation of a systematic and collaborative referral process that connects children to community partners for provision of direct services (e.g., evidence-based therapy, recreational & Therapeutic based groups, mentor programs, etc.).

When a first responder identifies a child that has been exposed to violence or trauma, an ACERT family advocate is notified to work with the family and identify appropriate agencies for referral. A signed release of information is obtained from the parent/caregiver and that release, along with the police report that was generated from the incident, is shared with the social services agency or health center. From there, the agency representative will reach out to the family for typical intake scheduling (*Figure 11*). Manchester Community Schools aims to improve connections and communication mechanisms between ACERT and Beech Street and Gossler Park to better serve students by coordinating care and support.

Figure 11



How it works



IX. **Invitational Priority:** *Supporting Effective Transition Practices, Continuity of Services and Supports, and Aligned Instruction for Students from Preschool and Other Early Childhood Settings into Kindergarten and from Kindergarten into the Early Grades (K-3)*

Manchester Community Schools is working with academia to implement evidence-based, developmentally appropriate practices across early learning and early elementary grades that are designed to increase and improve educational opportunities for students, including instructional alignment and support for staff/teachers and school leaders to promote academic recovery.

Many states have adopted a play-based curriculum for kindergarten. Play can often be misinterpreted as being totally unfocused and unworthy as a teaching tool. However, play initiatives for the 21st century suggest that it promotes the discovery of each child's talents, needs and abilities. **Figure 12** shows the continuum of play-based learning.

Figure 12



During guided play, the teacher assumes the role of an intentional planner, observer, active play participant, researcher, and documentarian. When preparing for guided play experiences, the teacher intentionally plans *invitations* within the environment, essentially setting the stage for

meaningful and imaginative interactions. The teacher selects materials and their arrangements with intention; drawing upon children's interests, inspiring their curiosity and creativity, and encouraging them to explore. Though the teacher may anticipate the types of interactions that will take place between children and materials and between children with other children, the children always take the lead during guided play. As children respond to the teacher's intentional invitations for play, the teacher assumes the role of an active participant engaging alongside children.

The teacher follows the child's lead while assuming the role of a researcher. Teachers thoughtfully observe children's play and extend their thinking and learning through the use of open-ended questioning and scaffolding techniques. As teachers make observations about individual students' developmental needs and learning styles, play is used as a vehicle to help children make connections and to transfer their knowledge and skills across content areas through natural and meaningful integration.

Lastly, teachers document evidence of their students' learning through play by taking photographs and videos, scribing their imaginative stories, and asking children to revisit and retell their experiences. While this documentation serves as evidence of student learning, it also encourages teachers to engage more deeply in reflective practice. Through observation and documentation, teachers gather information about each child and develop a better understanding of their strengths, challenges, interests, and approaches to learning. As a result, teachers are able to effectively plan environments that offer rich and meaningful learning opportunities for each child.

Play-based Kindergarten is being launched at Beech Street and Gossler Park this fall 2023, in partnership with the University of New Hampshire (UNH). UNH's uses an embedded practice-

based coaching model to support and empower Kindergarten teachers as they facilitate guided play. The goal is for teachers to implement at least one hour of guided play per day at the conclusion of the coaching experience. The coaching process is highly collaborative and individualized with each participating teacher.

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