

Early-Phase Competition Absolute Priority 4 (SEL)

Village of Wisdom, Inc.

S411C230230

The Just Good Teaching Project designed to support parent-teacher partnerships and increase students access to culturally affirming learning environments leading to increased academic performance

Applicant Name: Village of Wisdom

Project Title: That's Just Good Teaching Program

Type of Grant Requested: (select one) Early-Phase Mid-Phase Expansion

Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

Absolute Priority 1-- Demonstrate a Rationale (Early), Moderate (Mid), Strong (Expansion)

Absolute Priority 2-- Field-Initiated Innovations—General

Absolute Priority 3-- Promoting STEM Education

Absolute Priority 4-- Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs

Absolute Priority 5-- Educator Recruitment and Retention

Competitive Preference Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

Competitive Preference Priority 1— Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning* (FOR EARLY-PHASE AP5 APPLICANTS ONLY)

Total number of students to be served by the project: 5100

Grade level(s) to be served by the project: 3-8

Definition of high-need students: Black Students, especially those in Title 1

Brief description of project activities: Our project uses two modalities of innovative activities. 1) Activities to augment the content and delivery of educational material so that it will be more culturally affirming to Black children. We accomplish this by providing professional development to teachers grounded in our Culturally Affirming Learning Environments Framework. The professional development is led by VOW staff and parent leaders. 2) Activities to augment that deepen teachers' relationships with Black parents and, as a result, improve teachers' ability to leverage Black parents deep cultural expertise related to their child's culture. These activities include a year-long residency/validation program that teachers complete in partnership with a VOW parent leader to develop the teacher's capacity to integrate the Culturally Affirming Learning Environments Framework into their instruction. Teachers who successfully complete the validation program are then prepared to train other teachers and school staff at their schools and others.

Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes: The proposed project will: 1) improve and support educators' capacity to respond to the socio-emotional development needs of underserved students (Absolute Priority 4.1); 2) create education settings that are supportive, positive, identity-safe and inclusive for students from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Absolute priority 4.2) by building trusting relationships between teachers and parents (i) and providing high-quality professional development to increase educators asset-based mindset around using culturally affirming instruction (ii). When we strengthen the parent-teacher partnership, students will demonstrate more positive socioemotional and academic outcomes.

Summary of how the project is innovative: First, this project uses a one-of-a-kind framework, the Culturally Affirming Learning Environments (CALEs) Framework, that is innovative as it was developed from the expertise of Black parents. Second, this framework has been validated via a psychometric study that VOW conducted with the support of award winning Psychometrician Fantasy Lozada. Third, this project leverages Black parent expertise related to Black culture by situating Black parents as reflective

practice partners to educators who often need coaching and support in finding affirming and non-problematic ways of integrating Black culture into their instruction. Finally, we leverage teachers who have learned to apply the CALEs framework in their school's unique context. Their role will be to support the rest of the school in integrating CALE Framework-informed instruction in their schools. Perhaps some projects might have certain elements of the proposed work, but we know of no entity that has looked to integrate these different strategies in the way we have done and plan to develop further with this project.

Other studies related to the proposed project: CASEL is the entity largely credited for developing the Socio-Emotional Learning theory recently produced a report that outlines a series of case studies of organizations and schools doing work that is related to this project. Village of Wisdom is one of the organizations highlighted in their recent report.

Proposed implementation sites: Confirmed - Durham Public Schools (at least 3 identified), Maureen Joy Charter School, Central Park for Children, Potential - Durham Kipp School, NC A&T Aggie Academy,

Organizations partnering with this project: Village of Wisdom, Winston Salem State University, ICF, Jobs