



Proposal: Pinellas County Schools 2016-2017

I. Youth Development

According to a McKinsey & Company report, if we had closed the racial achievement gap by 1998, by 2008 our national GDP would have been \$525B higher. With the persistence of educational inequity disproportionately impacting students of color, not only are nearly a quarter of Pinellas County Schools students in danger of falling into this gap, but our broader community as a whole continues to suffer the economic cost.

As described in the following proposal, Community Tampa Bay's PCS-contracted programs address the strategic plan's explicit bridging the achievement gap" goals (Goal 1, Action 3: "increase achievement levels of minority students").

Additionally, in 2004, Principals' Multi-Cultural Advisory Committees (PMAC) became a School Board mandate and remain an action step in the PCS strategic plan under Goal 3. The action step is "to ensure schools have an active and documented Principal's Multicultural Advisory Committee (PMAC) program which addresses the responsibilities of schools to provide an environment reflective of the District's core value of cultural competence."

In addition to supporting Goal 1, Action 3, Community Tampa Bay's PCS services also assist the district in achieving Goal 3's objective to provide an environment of cultural competence, including assisting the district in addressing its challenges in disproportionate disciplinary practices for students of color.

PCS Contracted Service 1: ANYTOWN

ANYTOWN is a 5-day, 4-night residential conference for teens that gives them a framework for having hard conversations with people who don't look like them and an understanding of why that's important. We call these tactics "dialogue" and "cross-cultural interactions," both of which are proven techniques for prejudice reduction. Students experience interactive workshops that teach and demonstrate the concept of "-isms" or systems of advantage that favor one group of individuals over another and the ways these systems create and reinforce discrimination.

Throughout the week, ANYTOWN participants have the opportunity to further explore and process the knowledge they are gaining in these workshops in dialogue groups, which they meet with several times



during their ANYTOWN experience. Dialogue groups engage students in the exploration of their own identity and how their social identity impacts the ways that they interact with their family, friends and broader community. Dialogue groups also allow students to build emotional intelligence and practice empathy for others by offering the opportunity to listen and share with peers in a diverse, inclusive and confidential environment. In addition to workshops and dialogue groups, ANYTOWN also creates diverse and inclusive dorm communities for students, where they not only sleep, but also interact in intentional ways with their “dorm families,” including reflecting on their day, what they learned about themselves and others and what challenges are arising for them as we present and discuss the many layers of discrimination. Finally, through structured free time during the ANYTOWN week, or what we call “community time,” students have the chance to further experience cross-cultural interactions with new friends and ANYTOWN staff.

The ANYTOWN week concludes with a leadership workshop that offers teens the opportunity to create an action plan for how they will work to interrupt stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination in their schools and communities.

ANYTOWN contributes to students' positive identity development. A wide body of academic research shows that identity affirmation is associated with a number of pro-social behaviors that enhance a student's overall educational experience. Additionally, ANYTOWN increases students' sense of social responsibility, which is linked to academic achievement.

A study of black males who graduated from ANYTOWN between the years of 2010 and 2012 demonstrated that 100% of these students also graduated from high school. In Pinellas County, at just 61%, the black male graduation rate continues to lag below the district average of 78% and the national graduation rate of over 80%. Community Tampa Bay’s proven effectiveness in developing the academic and leadership potential of students of color can not only benefit the students themselves, but also assist Hillsborough County Schools in achieving its goals. The ANYTOWN program aligns with Florida Standards for social studies curriculum and has 10 years of research data demonstrating its effectiveness. Results showing the effectiveness of ANYTOWN as a relevant community-based practice for reducing discrimination were published in March 2016 in the textbook, *The Cost of Racism for People of Color* (American Psychological Association).

Proposed District Commitment

Proposed 2016-2017 # of PCS Youth to be Served through ANYTOWN	65
Proposed District Commitment	\$65,000

For reference the following shows the 2015-2016 district commitment

2015-2016 # of PCS Youth Served through ANYTOWN	53 (contracted for 50)
District Commitment	\$50,000



PCS Contracted Service 2: Youth Leadership Conferences

Youth Leadership Conferences take 50-60 youth through an all-day empowerment experience designed to give them the inspiration and the tools they need to create more inclusive spaces for all students in their school or community.

Youth Conferences begin with **cross-cultural teambuilding** as a way to build rapport and create safety between students; the day continues with **transformative dialogue** designed to promote empathy for people like us and different from us; we conclude with **action-planning** and application of the skills required to interrupt exclusion.

We facilitate a planning meeting with a group of youth leaders to get a sense of the culture of your school or program, and to identify any specific challenges you'd like to address with the conference. We also offer optional follow-up sessions with either the whole group or the youth leadership team to process lessons learned, and ensure the sustainability of the dialogue started by the conference.

PCS faculty had this to say in 2015-2016 about Youth Conferences: "As the faculty liaison for our school's MultiCultural Advisory Committee and Gay-Straight Alliance, I have had the distinct pleasure of working with Community Tampa Bay for several years now. I am always impressed with their skillful way of handling hot-button current issues in a way that is both entertaining and informative. They have an innate ability to get all of the students involved and make them feel welcomed, and to debrief potentially volatile and emotional subject matter in a manner that takes everyone's comfort level into consideration. The dialogue they promote among the students and staff is engaging and relevant, and students walk away feeling empowered and ready to facilitate positive change in their communities. I would not hesitate for a second to recommend them for any kind of collaboration with our youth!"

-Elizabeth C. Hooper, Seminole High School

"Thanks for making our student experience at the Community Tampa Bay Youth Conference a meaningful one. Some powerful themes were explored and students were able to take a look at how society impacts our prejudices and how we contribute to them by acceptance. They identified the barriers to greatness, obstacles to bonding and made commitments to change." -Bahiyah Sadiki, Principal's Multicultural Advisory Committee Sponsor, Gibbs High School

After every Youth Conference, students are asked to reflect on their experience as it relates to our programmatic goals. Below are the average results from the participants of Youth Conferences facilitated by Community Tampa Bay in 2015-16:



As a result of this program/event, I can better recognize the impact of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination.	94%
During this program, I had meaningful interactions with people whose race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or ability is different from my own	96%
This program has taught me techniques to reduce prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination	93%

Additionally, 93% of students felt like they are more equipped to facilitate a dialogue with their peers about issues of diversity.

Youth are also given space to both free write comments as well as complete sentences about their experiences. Below are some of the anecdotal comments made by participants in 2015-16 Youth Conferences:

- *“It was a great way to meet new people, and bond with friends. Taught me good communication skills and to accept everyone is different.”*
- *“I learned different isn’t a bad thing at all.”*
- *“It was amazing to see how we could come together, so thank you for bringing us all together.”*
- *“I enjoyed both facilitators and their clever ways to uncover and interact with our hidden and personal observations. Thank you for coming and changing our lives.”*
- *“Thank you so much. You really motivated me to help out and change things.”*

Proposed District Commitment

Proposed 2016-2017 # of Youth Conferences	15
Proposed 2016-2017 District Commitment	\$57,500

**This service also includes support for District-Wide PMAC Events, including two end-of-year celebrations, as well as annual PMAC liaison training*

For reference the following shows the 2015-2016 district commitment

2015-2016 # of Youth Conferences Provided	12
2015-2016 District Commitment	\$50,000



II. Cultural Competence

According to the National Education Association (NEA), cultural competence, or the ability to successfully teach students who come from a culture or cultures other than one's own, is the key to thriving classrooms. **According to the NEA, there are five basic skillsets that characterize cultural competence:**

- Being culturally self-aware
- Being aware of students' culture
- Understanding the dynamics of difference
- Valuing diversity
- Institutionalizing cultural knowledge and adapting to diversity.

In 2015-2016, Community Tampa Bay (CTB) worked with Pinellas County Schools (PCS) to implement a scalable cultural competence training model for district professionals that aims to address cultural competence and seeks to assist in bridging the achievement gap.

Results from training and follow-up technical assistance with schools that were part of the 2015-2016 cohort are as follows (to-date as of April 20 with additional training and technical assistance pending):

- 92% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training helped them gain and understanding of the impact of exclusion in our schools.
- 92% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training helped them experience prejudice-reducing cross-cultural interactions.
- 80% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training helped them identify and develop strategies for reducing prejudice and exclusion in their schools.

Schools with an inclusive culture, where that culture is established and maintained by leadership, see better academic outcomes among students of color and also see fewer disciplinary referrals for students of color because faculty are able to better understand and meet the needs of a diverse student body.

In 2016-2017, Community Tampa Bay proposes to increase cultural competence training from one cohort, reaching 5 school, reaching approximately 60 PCS personnel, to 3 cohorts, reaching 15 schools and up to 180 PCS personnel. Our training and consultation plan includes the following activities:

- **Principal & Administrator Consultation** - Selected schools in each of 3 cohorts will receive two hours of dedicated consultation to identify cultural competence challenges, barriers, opportunities and orientation on cohort process.



- **Cohort Training** – Selected school leaders, educators, parents, students and community stakeholders will receive one full day and two half-days of cultural competence training that will include action planning (up to 60 participants in cohort)
- **PMAC Liaison Consultation** - Selected schools will receive an additional two hours of consultation for PMAC liaisons on supporting cultural competence initiatives and action steps
- **Follow-up with School-Based Cohorts** - Participants will receive additional technical assistance on addressing challenges in implementing a cultural competence action plan and recommendations for continued engagement
- **Community Dialogue Facilitation** – Dialogue include school personnel, parents, students and community partners to compile community-based input on increased cultural competence in schools (to be coordinated by PCS and facilitated by CTB)

Throughout the process, we will continue to work with PCS personnel to identify schools, integrate PCS culturally responsive curriculum training initiatives into our model, coordinate data-gathering opportunities, engage in action planning with individual schools (as part of our follow-up) and share progress with PCS leadership. The 2015-2016 cost for one cohort, including 5 schools and 60 personnel was \$37,900. To expand services to include 3 cohorts, including up to 180 personnel is proposed at the following rate:

Proposed District Commitment

Proposed 2016-2017 # of Schools Trained through Cohort Model	15
Proposed 2016-2017 # of District Professionals Served	180
Proposed 2016-2017 District Commitment	\$89,500

**Training hours for each school involved in cohort total 2,880 (assuming 15 schools, 60 participants per school). Each school also receives an additional 10 hours of technical assistance and follow-up. The total cost per school for this engagement is \$5,966.*

For reference the following shows the 2015-2016 district commitment

2015-2016 # of Schools Trained through Cohort Model	6
2015-2016 # of District Professionals Served	60
2015-2016 District Commitment	\$37,900

Total Proposed PCS Commitment for 2016-2017: \$212,000

This commitment increases youth development services by approximately 40% and scales cultural competence training to triple its reach. Each of these services, and the sustained commitment for providing them in the district, will contribute to achieving the district’s strategic plan goals of bridging the achievement gap and providing safe learning environments where cultural competence is not just a priority, but a valued part of district culture.