



# Peace Community Center

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center, Cohort 16

### Executive Summary

2019-2020

prepared by MEMconsultants, LLC



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# Executive Summary

Peace Community Center (The Center) offers a pathway model of holistic services that supports students in grades 2-12 with academic and social-emotional resources, enrichments and development. In partnership with Tacoma Public Schools and students' families, the organization serves students in grades 2-5 at McCarver Elementary and grades 6-8 at Jason Lee Middle School. In 2019-2020, these programs were funded by the first of a five year 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grant, which is the focus of this report.

## Overall Strengths and Next Steps

### Key Accomplishments

**Student engagement in programming.** Peace Community Center enrolled 151 students for the 2019-2020 school year; 70 at McCarver Elementary School and 81 at Jason Lee Middle School. Despite a shortened in-person school year, engagement in McCarver Scholars was high – 83% of students were regular attendees, present for 30 or more days throughout the year, and 97% attended during both semesters.

**Staff fostering positive relationships.** Observations at both program sites revealed that adults delivering the program fostered positive interactions with youth, treating them with warmth and respect, and maintaining positive body language. Additionally, more than 8 out of 10 surveyed families report that staff take good care of youth and that children say nice things about staff.

**Identifying and meeting the needs of families.** Most surveyed families (86%) agree that The Center introduces them to resources or tools they can use to support their child(ren). Program records demonstrate how The Center, in response to school closures and social unrest, invested 100 hours in reaching out to families individually to understand what kinds of assistance they needed and responding to those requests. The Center delivered academic support, food assistance, technology access and other supports in the context of social distancing.

### Recommendations for Improvement

**Improve program culture and student retention at Jason Lee.** In 2019-2020, most (84%) enrolled students attended fewer than 30 sessions, while 1 in 3 fall enrollees did not return for the spring semester. Program observations revealed a struggling program culture. Take time now to develop a plan for creating a more positive program culture and increasing student sense of belonging at Bobcat Scholars. Steps to do so may include investing in staff training and seeking input from past program participants on how to improve the youth experience in the program.

**Realign goals and measures for academic outcomes and social and emotional skill building.** Spring 2020 was so unusual that it has been almost impossible to draw conclusions about academic progress of students; this challenge is common across out of school time programs in community with school closures. This particular evaluation is also hampered by multiple distinct lists of program goals: an evaluation plan from the funded grant proposal, a separate list of required grant goals, and a recently developed logic model reflecting program changes the context of remote learning. The 2020-21 program year promises to be an unusual one again. Peace Community Center should re-examine how they are supporting students' academic progress and SEL skill building through remote instruction and clarify the best indicators of program success in achieving outcomes.

## About the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

**McCarver Scholars at McCarver Elementary School** serves students grades 2-5. The program provides support for students during the school day, with after-school tutoring and enrichment activities four days per week from 3:30 – 6:00pm. In 2019-2020, 70 students enrolled in McCarver Scholars; 83% attended regularly (30 days or more).

**Bobcat Scholars at Jason Lee Middle School** serves students grades 6-8 in partnership with Trinity Presbyterian Church. This program has two main components. First, during the school year, students receive individualized academic coaching, after-school tutoring and mentoring, and high school readiness seminars that prepare them for the transition to high school. Second, the student population is exposed to a variety of community partner led enrichments that allow them to explore their interests in traditionally underrepresented careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. In 2019-2020, 81 students enrolled in Bobcat Scholars; 16% attended regularly

**Family engagement is an important program component.** Families are engaged in their student’s success through events designed to strengthen family relationships, delivery of resources and tools to empower them to support their child in school, and individualized outreach from program staff regarding their child’s progress in the program. In 2019-2020, 18 families attended in-person family engagement events prior to school closure. Peace Community Center’s efforts to engage families are received well.

- 90% of surveyed families agree they are invited to family events.
- 85% of surveyed families agree they feel welcome at the program.

## Remote Program Delivery and Progress in Meeting Local Needs

In the immediate aftermath of school closures in March 2020, program staff identified new program goals and outcomes most relevant and needed for the students and families it serves.

Post-COVID Center Goals	Outcomes	Spring 2020 Progress Towards Local Outcomes
<p><b>Students</b> experience equitable access to distance learning; students engage in school offerings</p> <p>Students receive social and academic support that minimizes the trauma of that pandemic and its impacts</p>	<p>Maintain academic stability; receive support in overcoming barriers to participation in distance learning</p> <p>Maintain social-emotional connection with caring adults and peers</p>	<p>21 students received technology support (laptop, hotspot and/or coaching in use)</p> <p>284 academic support resources were delivered</p> <p>27 hours of coaching and tutoring were delivered remotely</p> <p>9 educational videos made available to students, families, staff and board members</p> <p>6 middle school enrichments offered 11 times. Topics included mentoring, youth leadership, physical activity, STEAM, literacy and art</p> <p>5 middle school students attended a virtual ‘Hilltop Hang’ event</p>
<p><b>Families</b> have the resources necessary to meet the basic needs of their children</p>	<p>Are supported in assisting their children during distance learning</p> <p>Receive resources that provide bridge support during the COVID crisis and social unrest</p>	<p>100 family engagement contact hours were logged</p> <p>54 families received grocery gift cards</p> <p>9 families received housing/living assistance</p> <p>6 families received college counseling</p> <p>16 families receive other requested supports</p>

## Progress in Meeting State Outcomes by OSPI Objectives

The funded application identifies goals and objectives relevant to OSPI objective areas. Due to the abrupt closure of schools and cancellation of spring testing, the measures outlined to assess progress towards these objectives are largely unavailable. However, some progress towards achieving relevant goals was identified from the data available.

<b>McCarver Scholars at McCarver Elementary</b>		
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>2019-20 Progress</b>
Students regularly participating in the program will show improvement in reading.	50% of regularly attending students will read at grade level as measured by formative iReady.	84% of regular attendees reading below grade level in fall showed growth at winter; while 37% increased one or more grade levels.
<b>Bobcat Scholars at Jason Lee Middle School</b>		
Students regularly participating in the program will show improvement in GPA.	70% of regularly attending students will increase their cumulative GPA.	60% increased their cumulative GPA before school closures in March.
Students regularly participating in the program will show improvement in attendance.	80% of regularly attending students attend 90% or more days of school as tracked through school attendance records.	50% attended school $\geq$ 90% days in fall; 75% attended school $\geq$ 90% days in spring (pre-COVID).
<b>Family Engagement at McCarver Elementary and Jason Lee Middle School sites</b>		
Increase family engagement and improve family resource offerings.	75% of families report that program increased their ability to support students as measured by family surveys.	85-86% of families reported that the program introduced them to resources or tools they could use to support their child.