

Atlas Valley Unified School District
Equitable Access Grant Narrative

A. Document the need to facilitate access to the 21st CCLC program

- **Students with special needs**

Our students will not experience lack of access due to language or special needs. Our staff is fully trained and our facilities are fully adapted to special needs; in addition, district instructional practices, materials and facilities are fully adapted to meet the special needs of our students. Staff employed for the CCLC will be selected for their ability to meet the needs of the diverse student population.

All instructional staff engages in annual professional development to support them in meeting the needs of English Language Learners, special needs students, culturally diverse student populations, and children from homes where poverty is an issue. This training includes identification of special needs, modification of instruction including differentiation and scaffolding, accommodating cultural characteristics of various student groups, integrating language acquisition strategies, and understanding the impact that poverty has on a child's learning style.

- **Transportation issues**

Transportation is the key equitable access issue for implementation of this CCLC proposal. Both target schools serve students from the Vista Loma neighborhood of Atlas Valley. This neighborhood is characterized by high poverty, drugs, gangs and crime. It is not a safe neighborhood in the dark which is when most students would need to walk to or from the project services.

Poverty contributes to lack of access because cars cost lots of money to operate and maintain, and as we all experience, gas is expensive. Poverty is represented by the high numbers of children participating in the free and reduced price lunch program. 86.5% of students at Yuma Loma and 75% of students at Atlas Valley Middle School participate. Most families have one or no car. If a family has a car it is used by one parent go to work leaving the other parent without transportation during the day. Many families are single parent families who have no transportation or unreliable transportation at best.

Atlas Valley is largely a "bedroom" community and the majority of people leave early to the LA area during the day for work. Children attending the Before School program would have to walk to school regardless of how far they live from the schools so busses are needed to provide equitable access to all students. The attendance boundary for Atlas Valley Middle School is bisected by Highway 18, a divided, four lane road to the north and Bear Valley Road, also a four lane road to the south. The dangers created by crossing these busy roadways is another important reason the Equitable Access grant is critical to ensuring all students have safe, reliable access to the CCLC programs.

Forty-five percent of students at Atlas Valley Middle School are bussed to school each day living more than one mile from the school campus. At Yuma Loma Elementary School, 41% of students are bussed to school each day. Parents are concerned about the safety of their children and have expressed the desire for bussing to and from the CCLC program. The only exception to this is at Yuma Loma where parents prefer to pick their children up in the evening after the program rather than have their young children dropped off at bus stops in the

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dark. This process has been used for years at Yuma Loma for after school programs and it works well. AVMS parents are comfortable that their older children are safe to walk home from their bus stops in the early evening so an after program bus is needed for the middle school.

B. Describe how the needs, strengths, and resources of the community related to equitable access were assessed.

The key access issue considered by the grant development team of the principals, Family Literacy Director, Title I Coordinator, and members of the Loma Vista Neighborhood Network Advisory Committee was location of services and how to get students to and from the programs. It was decided that the two schools where this CCLC is located are the best choices in terms of location and program operation.

Other potential means of transporting students to the CCLC program were considered; however, Atlas Valley has limited public transportation and it does not provide service to the schools. The local rapid transit district provided a cost estimate to the planning team for transportation however it far exceeded the cost estimate provided by Atlas Valley Unified School District.

The team also conducted a review of facilities where the program could be housed. It was decided that the schools are the only feasible venues and are the most central and appropriate locations to provide CCLC services. Furthermore, the entire staff at each school has a desire for high engagement with the project services. This high level of staff support for the CCLC provides excellent access to facilities, materials, and to the talents of certificated staff members so there is no superior alternative site where CCLC services might be located.

The Peter Smith Family Center located on the campus of Yuma Loma Elementary School, was another asset identified by the grant development team. Since the Family Center is already providing some services for students, it only made sense to utilize that resource and target it for expansion under this program. The access provided under this grant will allow the Atlas Valley Middle School families to take advantage of these expanded services.

C. Identify the resources that are currently available and discuss why there may be a need for additional resources.

- **Describe how the program will address unmet needs.**

This proposal provides funding for daily transportation of students according to the schedule in Table 1 below. The district does not have funding available to pay for this transportation. The table displays the bus runs for each of the three program components for which bus transportation is necessary to provide equitable access.

Table 1	Program Components			Total Hours Needed
School	Before School	After School	Supplemental Days	Yuma Loma = 1.5 hrs. per run AVMS = 1 hr. per run
Yuma Loma	Daily 180 Runs	Parents pick students up	Daily 60 Runs*	240 x 1.5 x \$50 = \$18000
AVMS	Daily 180 Runs	Daily 180 Runs	Daily 60 Runs*	420 X 1 x \$50 = \$21,000

*30 program days with one run to school and one from school = two runs per day.

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- **Provide documentation/justification for the specific uses planned for optional grant funds and clearly explain how use of such funds is expected to improve or mitigate access issues among students proposed to be served.**

This Equitable Access grant provides access to the children who are currently bussed to and from school during the regular school day because they live outside the one mile radius identified by district policy as too far to safely walk to school. As mentioned above, this represents 41% of students (349) at Yuma Loma and 45% of students (462) at AVMS.

These funds will provide access for any student at either school who wants to attend by paying for bus transportation using only the district busses and drivers. Yuma Loma requires 1.5 hours per trip of bus time while AVMS requires 1 hour of bus time per trip. AVUSD charges \$50 per hour to schools for use of the busses which accounts for 100% of the funds requested as shown in the budget submitted.

The only limitation that occurs sometimes is when a student at Yuma Loma wants to attend but whose parent cannot pick them up. In these cases which occur now and then, the Principal works with the Title I Coordinator to identify a parent whose child attends the program and who is willing and able to transport the child home after the program. This car pooling opportunity is made known to parents through bulletins and flyers that go out to parents each year. Parents must identify the adults on the enrollment sheet who are allowed to sign their child out of the program.

- **Describe your plans for maintaining accurate records, for conducting an annual fiscal audit, and for providing annual budget reports of the use of direct grant funds for equitable access.**

Equitable Access funds will only be used for the purpose of providing transportation to and from the CCLC program. All funds received by the district are accounted for as required by state laws and district policies. An annual audit is conducted of all district funds by a third part auditing firm to ensure that expenditures are appropriate and within applicable laws and district policy. The annual audit is submitted to the Board of Education for review and approval.

Expenditures from the Equitable Access budget will be approved according to the district's policy. The first approval is from made by the Principal at each site who is assigned primary responsibility for managing the budget. The second level of approval is made by the Director of Fiscal Services who has ultimate responsibility for all district funds. Approved expenditures from budgets are processed and paid by the district Accounting Department that follows auditable accounting procedures for accounts payable.

Principals receive monthly budget reports called Fiscal Activity Reports (FAR's) for all budgets assigned to their school. These reports show details for all expenditures made to a particular fund and are reviewed carefully by the Principals for accuracy. If discrepancies are noted these are reported to the Director of Fiscal Services for explanation and correction if appropriate.