EDUCATION: WEST OAKLAND INITIATIVE (WOI)

Program Summary

- Purpose: Providing academic interventions, integrating in-class supports, parent engagement, and case management to strengthen literacy rates and address SEL, in-home structure, and self empowerment
- Serves 62 elementary and high school youth in West Oakland annually
- Provide social emotional learning support services to youth and families and supports through critical school and community partnerships in a variety of ways:
    1. Family Coaching– Providing supports for families to connect to their communities and develop skills and resources for self-sufficiency;
    2. Student Services – Working with students to build literacy and positive school behaviors;
    3. Educational Supports – Providing classroom learning supports and academic enrichment, including culturally relevant books, school supplies, holiday/cultural celebrations, and recreational field trips, as well as helping school systems be more inclusive and responsive to students.
- Budget: $326,000; Government – Oakland Fund for Children & Youth (OFCY), Alameda County Health Care Services Agency (ACHCSA); Foundations: Socius Foundation, Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF), and the Kenneth Rainin Foundation

The Need/Gaps We're Addressing

West Oakland residents experience the city's highest concentration of environmental stress factors, including violence, unemployment, housing insecurity, and poverty. There is also a lack of culturally responsive resources for struggling students who need supports and interventions. These factors negatively impact student success, and contribute to a widening achievement gap. Root causes for low school engagement, poor academic performance, and chronic absenteeism are often due to the impacts of poverty and social inequities. In class and family engagement services are pivotal in helping students and their families overcome the obstacles to academic achievement.

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WOI Webpage

http://lincolnfamilies.org/programs-services/
education/west-oakland-initiative

For more information please call
510.273.4700

Outcomes/Impact
- 92% of students improved reading levels
- 90% of students increased leadership capacity, a key factor in positive youth development
- 89% improved school attendance

Call to Action
- A $500 gift provides transportation to 5 enrichment field trip experiences for WOI students
- A $1,500 gift provides 15 students with culturally and linguistically relevant books they can take home to read with their families and reinforce reading
- $80,000 in funding would support an Academic Mentor who can be embedded in a school-site all day, engaging students in learning and helping teachers with literacy strategies.

Max and Aisha's Story:

Max and Aisha were struggling with attendance. Although their mom, Michelle, was very involved, her children were not showing up until 10 am, often missing the reading and math portion of their daily instruction. Michelle co-slept with her children, making it difficult for her children to go to sleep at an earlier time without her. After about a year, Michelle was finally able to admit she needed some assistance, after noticing that Aisha was developing at a slower rate. WOI recognizes that often in the African American community, parents need time to feel safe confiding in and communicating that they need help, for fear that CPS may be called, and information may be used against them.

After some time, Michelle felt comfortable and trusted the team at WOI. She was given some tools to use at home, including getting Max and Aisha on a regular schedule and bedtime, allowing Michelle to have some time to herself at night. As a result attendance improved and Max and Aisha received a perfect attendance award.