

2020–21 Every Student Succeeds Act Comprehensive Support and Improvement Prompts Form

The instructions for completing this form will begin on page 2.

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone
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Schools Identification

Please list the school(s) in the LEA that are eligible for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI).

The Gould Educational Center services students from the nine different school districts that make up Madera County in regionalized programs for students with moderated to severe disabilities. Students with identified special needs from preschool to age 22 participate in the Gould Educational Center programs. These students are served in Special Day Classes at various locations including regular education school sites and a center based educational site. The students served by the Gould Educational Center may have severe cognitive disabilities, significant emotional and behavioral needs, or may be students who are deaf/hard of hearing. For the majority of the students, academic achievement is measured by the California Alternate Assessment (CAA) as well as their progress and attainment of individual goals and objectives developed by their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). In addition to their specialized academic instruction, students often receive additional designated services such as speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, deaf/hard of hearing services, services for the visually impaired, orientation and mobility services, specialized health care, behavior intervention services and adapted physical education.

Gould Educational Center was identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) based on a graduation rate below 67%. In lieu of official California School Dashboard graduation rate data for 2020, The Madera County Superintendent of Schools used local California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data Systems (CALPADS) data to determine a graduation rate of 16.7% for a diploma and 26.7% for a diploma and Certificate of Completion.

Support for Identified Schools

Please describe how the LEA has or will support its eligible schools in developing CSI plans.

Again, the Gould Educational Center serves students who have moderate to severe disabilities. Many of the students who attend Gould have severe cognitive delays in addition to significant medical or emotional and behavioral needs that require the intensive service by the restrictive nature of the Gould Educational Center special day classes. For the majority of the students served by Gould academic achievement is measured by the California Alternate Assessment (CAA) and progress on individual IEP goals. MCSOS is a service provider for the nine school districts within Madera County and as students are able to move to a lesser restrictive environment, students are referred back to their district of residence.

Using the Dashboard results and data from our many sites, Gould Educational Center stakeholders identified areas for improvement. Staff from the Madera County Superintendent of Schools – our LEA -- were involved in every step of developing the CSI Plan and the LEA's Local Control and Accountability Plan. The comprehensive school-level needs assessment was facilitated by the LEA, and completed by looking at both state and local school data, survey data, and consultations with stakeholders, including staff and parents.

Our LEA and stakeholder comprehensive needs assessment followed the Improvement Science model, including: an initial goal setting meeting; a deep data dive following the 2019 Dashboard release to better understand our challenges and the systems of cause; and a root cause analysis in order to focus our collaborative efforts and identify drivers.

As mentioned previously, all students served by the Gould Educational Center have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). IEP teams meet yearly to discuss present levels, progress on goals, new goals, services and placement. Parents are integral members of an IEP team and play a major role in the development of their child's IEP. This open and ongoing communication allows for frequent feedback from parents and guardians.

Stakeholder input has been an important aspect of providing services to our students. The Gould Educational Center established a School Site Council in 2019 to help address the requirements of CSI. The School Site Council will annually review and provide feedback on the SPSA and LCAP.

Additional suggestions were gathered from student and parent empathy surveys that were developed through the CSI Improvement Plan development process. Each of the Program Directors interviewed students and parents soliciting specific feedback on targeted areas. Each of the Program Directors interviewed a selection of students and parents.

Parents were contacted via phone and students were interviewed in person. Interviewees were asked to answer a variety of questions about how they feel about their teacher or their child's teacher and how they are supported at school. Parents were asked additional questions about how to increase potential parent involvement and what type of activities they feel would be beneficial at the school for their child. Staff feedback is gathered annually via survey, in addition to monthly meetings with Program Directors.

Based on stakeholder feedback various interventions were identified to address the student outcomes, school climate, and conditions of learning. Those interventions include continued and increased support to new and veteran teachers. In past years, the Gould Educational Center has employed high numbers of new teachers who are teaching on a Short-Term Staff Permit (STSP) or a Provisional Internship Permits (PIP). These teachers are just entering intern programs and therefore are not yet eligible for an Induction Program. In an effort to support and grow these new teachers the Madera County Superintendent of Schools has created a new teacher Professional Learning Coach Program. New teachers are paired with veteran teachers who meet set criteria. These veteran teachers go through an application and interview process prior to being selected and paired with a new teacher. The Professional Learning Coaches receive a \$2,000 stipend for the year and work with no more than two new teachers. These Professional Learning Coaches communicate regularly with their new teachers throughout the school year. They also provide opportunities for classroom observations, the new teachers observing in their Professional Learning Coaches classrooms and the Professional Learning Coaches observing in their new teachers' classrooms. Debrief and discussion follow each classroom observation. In addition to the support of the Professional Learning Coach, newly hired teachers also attend an additional day of training prior to the start of the school year. New staff learn about the Madera County Superintendent of Schools and the students served by the Gould Educational Center in addition to various trainings designed to meet the needs of new teachers such as, classroom management, working with instructional assistants, classroom set up and introductory information about Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

In addition to the Professional Learning Coach Program, teachers are encouraged to attend a variety of professional learning opportunities, such as SELPA sponsored trainings, Diagnostic Center trainings, MCSOS IT Department trainings, and any outside trainings that have been preapproved by administration. Strong teachers provide students with an engaging and rigorous education and professional development allows educators to hone their skills as professionals. The Gould Educational Center provides a wide spectrum of services for students with moderate to severe disabilities. With such a wide variety of services being offered, professional development opportunities may need to look different to meet the various needs of the staff. Teachers are able to attend trainings sponsored by the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), which are local, trainers are brought into work with the Gould Educational Center Staff and staff is able to attend

approved outside trainings as well. Professional development strengthens the teaching skills of the staff working with the students in the Special Day Classes.

One of the mandates of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is that the student be educated in the least restrictive environment. Staff is always working towards preparing students for the next least restrictive environment, which may be an integrated school site, mainstreaming with typically developing peers or possibly even returning to their district of special education accountability or district of residence. It is important for teachers to be familiar with what environment students are working toward. Understanding the skills students will need to be successful in the next less restrictive environment allows teachers to be even more intentional about goal setting and the creation of teaching opportunities. Classroom observations allow teachers to see the actual environment that their student may be entering; this allows them to see how to most appropriately prepare them for their new classroom setting. Teachers also benefit from observing fellow educators who have successful classroom practices. Program Directors are able to set up observations, which allow teachers to learn from their peers. All observations are followed with discussion about what was observed and how they might incorporate those strategies into their own practices as a classroom teacher. Obviously during school closures staff have been unable to visit other classrooms. MCSOS continues to work with the district of residence for students to determine placement and during this time have completed joint assessments and observations of students in the virtual classrooms. Once this type of activities safely becomes an opportunity again, observations will resume. Until then staff will continue to adjust as needed and as they are able to do so.

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools operates programs for students who have met the criteria for special education services in the areas of deaf/hard of hearing. Many of these students have average cognition and are working toward a high school diploma. One student has chosen to participate in the afterschool Upward Bound Program. The Upward Bound Program is designed to increase the student completion of high school and enroll in and graduate from postsecondary education. Sign language interpreters are utilized for these college and career readiness opportunities. This student is currently in his senior year of high school.

The Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) funds will also allow the Madera County Superintendent of Schools to add to the technology that is already in place in the Gould Educational Center classrooms. Using past CSI funds, the Gould Educational Center has increased the amount of technology in the classroom substantially. Classrooms have received iPads and Chromebooks for individual student use. From the 2021-2022 school year the CSI funds were used to increase and upgrade classroom technology as well. Technology plays a major role in education in this ever-increasing digital world and many of the MCSOS classes use an online curriculum designed for students with moderate to severe

disabilities. In addition to increasing student engagement and participation, this new technology also allows for new and improved accommodations and modifications for students.

As mentioned previously, the Madera County Superintendent of Schools operates several regional classes for students who are eligible for special education with the qualifier of Emotional Disturbance (ED). Many of these students miss varying amounts of class time due to behavior and sensory regulation needs. When class time is missed, it does not allow the student to participate in lessons and learn key educational concepts, which can be vital to future learning exercises. The students served in the ED classes have already exhausted all resources at their school of residence, and by the time they are referred to the Madera County Superintendent of Schools many have significant learning gaps. These students are still demonstrating the same inability to regulate their emotions and behaviors that caused them to miss instruction in their school of residence. Many of these students do not react to sensory input in the same ways as their typically developing peers, which can result in students needing more sensory input to actively engage in their learning. When sensory needs are significant, it cannot only disrupt their learning, but also the learning of those around them. One of the integrated school sites that houses ED classes has a newly vacated space where a sensory regulation space was created. Instruction continues while students make use of the sensory regulation space. This space has been extremely effective and well used as students have transitioned back to entirely in-person instruction.

MCSOS continues to address the social emotional needs of students in all classes. With the school closures due to COVID-19, additional emphasis has been placed on the social emotional needs of students. Staff have expressed a need for materials to assist them in addressing the social emotional needs of their students. The Second Step Programs build students' social-emotional skills using evidence-based strategies and lessons. The family of programs available through Second Step includes curriculum for children participating in Early Childhood programs through high school programs. Students in Early Childhood programs will learn skills to harness their energy and potential by teaching them how to listen, pay attention, manage their behavior and get along with others. When students learn self-regulation and social-emotional skills taught with Second Step Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), they are ready to successfully participate in the elementary environment. The Second Step program supports the needs of students in the K-5 environment by promoting the students' social, emotional, and academic success. The Second Step program nurtures social-emotional competence and develops foundational learning skills. Once children are middle school students, the Second Step program is designed with middle schoolers in mind. The skills taught in this program are how to handle strong emotions, setting and meeting goals, making good decisions, and forging positive relationships. A successful learner is not measured by academics alone. The Second Step program teaches skills for resolving conflicts, working with others, forming healthy relationships, and making good decisions—so students can be more successful emotionally, socially, and academically. Social, emotional, and cognitive development are interdependent. The Second Step program is a universal social-

emotional learning program that has proven to improve daily student attendance and graduation rate for the schools that have implemented the learning programs. MCSOS has already used the Second Step program in various setting and has purchased additional materials to expand the program even further to address student needs. Additional training for staff will be provided as well for these new materials.

As the team worked to identify and describe any resource inequities it was determined that there do not appear to be any resources inequities between the students served by the Madera County Superintendent of Schools. One hundred percent of the students served are students with disabilities and as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all students are afforded a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). All things necessary for a student to receive educational benefit are provided to students. MCSOS works with the district of residence for each student to provide all that is detailed in each individual IEP.

Monitoring and Evaluating Effectiveness

Please describe how the LEA will monitor and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the plan to support student and school improvement.

The first goal for the Gould Educational Center School Plan for Student Achievement was to increase the percentage of students who graduated from the Gould Educational Center. The California School Dashboard data continues to show a graduation percentage that falls in the red category. This goal continues to be a challenge for the Madera County Superintendent of Schools (MCSOS). All of the students who attend the Gould Educational Center are students with disabilities. In fact, the students served have moderate to severe disabilities. As with all special education services, the goal is to serve students in the least restrictive environment. While some of the students served by MCSOS have average cognition, those students that have gained the skills necessary to be successful in a lesser restrictive environment are transitioned back to their district of residence. We will continue to use the Dashboard data to evaluate the graduation rate for the Gould Educational Center, however in lieu of official California School Dashboard graduation rate data for 2020, The Madera County Superintendent of Schools used local California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data Systems (CALPADS) data to determine a graduation rate of 16.7% for a diploma and 26.7% for a diploma and Certificate of Completion.

When engaging in the comprehensive needs assessment the LEA and stakeholders felt that it was appropriate to add a second goal to target professional development opportunities for Gould instructional staff. The second goal was to provide staff with the skills necessary to increase the rigor of instruction. While previously staff attendance to non-mandatory training was not formally measured, approximately 25% of the instructional staff attended non-mandatory

trainings during the 2018-2019 school year. During the 2019-2020 school year 69% of the teaching staff attended non-mandatory professional development opportunities. During the 2020-2021 school year, 64% of the teaching staff attended non-mandatory trainings. This is a slight decrease from the previous year's data, continues to be an increase over past years. We will continue to monitor staff attendance to non-mandatory trainings and create additional staff surveys specific to professional development.

The first strategy/activity was to provide professional development opportunities for staff. As mentioned previously the Gould Educational Center provides a wide variety of services for students with moderate to severe disabilities. In order to meet the varied needs of the staff, professional development opportunities need to specifically designed to meet the needs of each group. During the 2020-2021 school year presenters were brought in to provide professional development and many teachers attended trainings sponsored by the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Many of those trainings have no registration fee. Staff also attended approved outside trainings. The funds were to be used for registration or presenter fees, supplies and to pay for substitute teachers. During the 2020-2021 school year staff attended a variety of virtual trainings. Having the opportunity for virtual trainings allowed staff to attend trainings that might not normally be an option. The money that was not spent during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years will continue to be spend on professional development opportunities. MCSOS continues to offer mandatory trainings as well as non-mandatory trainings.

The second strategy/activity was designed to support new teachers recently hired by the Madera County Superintendent of Schools. In past years, the Gould Educational Center has employed high numbers of new teachers who are teaching on a Short-Term Staff Permit (STSP) or a Provisional Internship Permit (PIP). These teachers are just entering an intern programs and therefore are not yet eligible for an Induction Program. In an effort to support and grow these new teachers the Madera County Superintendent of Schools has created a new teacher Professional Learning Coach Program. New teachers are paired with veteran teachers who meet set criteria. The veteran teachers go through an application and interview process prior to being selected and paired with a new teacher. The Professional Learning Coaches receive a \$2,000 stipend for the year and work with no more than two new teachers. These Professional Leaning Coaches are required to communicate with their new teacher at least once per week. They also provide opportunities for classroom observations, the new teachers observing in their Professional Learning Coaches classrooms and the Professional Learning Coaches observing in their new teacher's classrooms. Debrief and discussion follow each classroom observation. In addition to the support of the Professional Learning Coaches newly hired teachers also attend an additional day of training prior to the school year starting. Prior the 2021-2022 school year all new teachers were able to attend an in-person new teacher training. Staff who were new to MCSOS during the 2020-2021 school year were also able to attend the training, which had to be canceled the previous year. During the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 not all of

the proposed expenditures were spent for a variety of reasons. One being that we have fewer new teachers that fit into this category. Over the last few years few new teachers have been needed to fill open positions. We were also unable to provide some of the in-person trainings due to COVID-19 restrictions. Any additional funds will be used in upcoming years.

The third strategy/activity was designed to allow staff time for classroom observations of the lesser restrictive environment that are the goal environment for their students. The Gould Educational Center provides a spectrum of services for students with moderate to severe disabilities. One of the mandates of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is that the student be educated in the least restrictive environment. Staff is always working towards preparing students for the next least restrictive environment, which may be an integrated school site, mainstreaming with typically developing peers or possibly even returning to their district of special education accountability or district of residence. It is important for teachers to be familiar with what environment students are working toward. Understanding the skills students will need to be successful in the next less restrictive environment allows teachers to be even more intentional about goal setting and the creation of teaching opportunities. Classroom observations allow teachers to see the actual environment that their student may be entering; this allows them to see how to appropriately prepare them for their new classroom setting. Teachers also benefit from observing fellow educators who have successful classroom practices. Unfortunately, this strategy/activity was not able to be fully implemented. Last year was the first year that the Gould Educational Center was required to write a SPSA so it was approved late in the year. This would not have been a problem and visits were being schedule, but due to school closures they were not made. During the 2020-2021 school year in-person classroom observations continued to be a challenge for staff due to COVID-19 limitations. As restrictions continue to relax, staff will be able to start scheduling observations again.

The fourth strategy/activity was to provide additional sign language interpreting services for a student participating in the Upward Bound Program with Madera South High School. This activity implemented after the plan was approved by the board. The Upward Bound Program was continued even after the school closure and the student and interpreter attended through Zoom. The student plans on continuing the program into the 2021-2022 school year. The student is currently in his senior year of high school. This strategy will be evaluated by reviewing the students progress toward meeting graduation requirements and grades as well as student and parent interviews.

The fifth strategy/activity was to purchase additional Chromebooks and iPads to what is already in place in the classroom to provide students with the opportunity to increase their interaction with the curriculum and further engage students. The goal was for students to also become more proficient at using technology for academic and career readiness purposes.

The Chromebooks were purchased, but they were not distributed to the classrooms, but to the students directly. Again, this was due to the school closures. In addition to technology for individual student use, classroom technology has also been increased and upgraded to further increase student engagement and provided for additional access to the online curriculum that is used in the moderate to severe special day classes. Staff and student surveys will provide feedback as to the effectiveness of this strategy. For students who are able to participate in district general education classes may also be a source of feedback.

The sixth strategy/activity was the creation of a sensory regulation space for the Emotional Disturbance classrooms located on an integrated school site. Sensory regulation can help students, who have an emotional disturbance, academically in the classroom by helping them control their disruptive behaviors. Learning these self-regulation skills allows the student and the education staff to focus more on their academic deficits. The space would be used for body stabilization equipment, quiet space, light regulators, auditory deregulation tools and gross body movement space. Instruction will continue while students are in the sensory regulation space, which lessens the impact of their behaviors on both their education and the education of their classmates. This sensory space is used regularly now that students have transitioned back to in-person instruction. This strategy will be evaluated by reviewing student behavioral data, suspension and discipline rates, grades as well as student teacher interviews.

MCSOS will also be expanding the use of the Second Step curriculum to address the social emotional needs of students. This program works to build the social-emotional skills using evidence-based strategies and lessons. The materials have been purchased and are available to all staff. The next step will be to provide additional training for staff, so they are able to use the program to the fullest extent. To assess the effectiveness of this strategy student daily attendance, discipline and suspension date will be reviewed as well as teacher, student and parent feedback.