PLUS PROGRAM · SAMPLE GRANT · TITLE I SCHOOLWIDE

SAMPLE TITLE I SCHOOLWIDE PLAN

MISSION CREEK HIGH SCHOOL, DEL ARROYO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR A FICTIONAL SCHOOL. FOR ILLUSTRATION ONLY.

ABOUT THIS SAMPLE

Mission Creek High School and Del Arroyo Unified School District are fictional. Every local figure in this sample is invented. Costs marked illustrative are estimates for the example. The facts about the PLUS Program and Direction are accurate. Writer's notes appear in quoted boxes after each section.

Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is an ongoing federal formula program. Funds reach schools through their district each year. There is no application window. A Title I school may run a schoolwide program when at least 40 percent of its students come from low-income families. A schoolwide program upgrades the whole school's program rather than serving only identified students. In California the schoolwide plan is consolidated into the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). The School Site Council develops and approves the SPSA, and the local governing board approves it. Every activity in a schoolwide program must be evidence-based.

> **Writer's note on federal funding.** Title I, Part A is funded for the 2026-27 school year. The President's 2027 budget request keeps Title I grants level, while the House 2027 bill would cut them by about 10 percent. Congress has not made a final decision, and a temporary funding bill runs through December 11, 2026. Confirm your school's 2027-28 allocation before the school site council approves the budget. In California, the school site council develops the SPSA and recommends it to the governing board for approval (Education Code 64001).

PLUS fits a schoolwide plan because it serves the whole campus. Each month it surveys a representative sample of students and gathers student input through a Forum. It then sends that information to the school's PBIS and MTSS teams. PLUS meets the ESSA level of moderate evidence (Tier 2, which CDE calls Level 2) for improving attendance.

This sample shows one goal from Mission Creek High School's 2027-28 SPSA, written in the sections of the CDE SPSA template.

Writer's note. CDE does not require its own SPSA template. A district template must still cover every schoolwide plan requirement. Check your district's version. Many districts use planning software that prints the CDE sections with its own headings. Keep the section names your district uses. Replace every figure with your school's data and your district's salary and cost figures.

SCHOOL AND PLAN INFORMATION

ITEM	ENTRY
School	Mission Creek High School (grades 9 to 12)
District	Del Arroyo Unified School District
Enrollment	1,850 students
Socioeconomically disadvantaged	74 percent
English learners	21 percent
Purpose of plan	Schoolwide Program
SPSA year	2027-28
School Site Council approval	May 12, 2027
Local governing board approval	June 16, 2027

Writer's note. List the SSC and board approval dates. A schoolwide expenditure must appear in the SPSA, the SSC must review, approve and recommend it to the board, and the board must approve the plan. The SSC also monitors and evaluates implementation each year. If the SSC approves PLUS in May, your board can approve the plan in June. That timing lets you register the Advisor for the June Advisor Institute.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNER INVOLVEMENT

Mission Creek High School developed this goal with its School Site Council, English Learner Advisory Committee, PBIS team, MTSS team and students. In February 2027 the school ran a Direction pilot with a representative sample of 170 students. That is less than 10 percent of the campus. Staff also held three student focus groups with 15 students each, selected to reflect the student body. The ELAC reviewed the results at its March meeting. The SSC reviewed them in April and approved the goal in May.

Students said bullying, rumors spread online and being left out happened most often in the cafeteria, between classes and in group chats. Several said they missed school after a conflict with other students. Families at the ELAC meeting asked that newcomer students be part of any student team. The PBIS team

asked for a regular way to learn from students why behavior data changed from month to month. Those requests shaped Strategies 3.1 to 3.3.

Starting in 2027-28, the PLUS class will give the SSC documented student input all year. Each cycle report states the top four critical issues the Forum identified, the Direction results behind them and the activities the PLUS Team carried out. The SSC will receive cycle reports at its regular meetings and use them in its annual review of this plan.

> **Writer's note.** Secondary schools must include students when they develop the plan. Show how you gathered student input, who reviewed it and what changed as a result. Most schools hear from students once a year. Explain that PLUS adds documented student input nine times a year, and name the meetings where your SSC will see it.

COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

Mission Creek High School completed its comprehensive needs assessment in winter 2027. The full needs assessment is posted with the SPSA on the district website and is available from the school office. The assessment reviewed California School Dashboard indicators, DataQuest attendance and discipline data, the district's local climate survey, the February 2027 Direction pilot and student focus groups. The findings below led to Goal 3.

MEASURE	MISSION CREEK HS	COMPARISON	SOURCE AND YEAR
Chronic absenteeism, all students	26.4%	District high schools 19.8%	DataQuest, 2025-26
Chronic absenteeism, English learners	31.2%	All students 26.4%	DataQuest, 2025-26
Suspension rate, all students	7.3% (orange level)	District 4.9%	Dashboard, 2026
Suspension rate, socioeconomically disadvantaged students	8.6%	All students 7.3%	Dashboard, 2026
Bullied on campus in the last 30 days	10.8%	Direction norm, grades 9 to 12: 6%	Direction pilot, February 2027
An adult on campus checked in with me in the last 30 days	54%	No norm set	Direction pilot, February 2027

Root causes identified. Conflict and exclusion between students drive many absences and suspensions. The school had no regular way for students to report those patterns to adults or help plan the response.

PBIS and MTSS teams reviewed behavior and attendance data each month without student input to explain it.

> **Writer's note.** The schoolwide needs assessment must cover the whole school, with attention to students failing or at risk of failing. The school must document how it ran the assessment, what it found and what it concluded. Link to the full needs assessment or say where readers can find it. Use measures your SSC already knows. If Direction is new to you, a local climate survey and focus groups can carry the student voice findings. A Direction question asked of more than 250 students across schools sets a norm. A school above the norm receives a warning indicator. Name that comparison when you have it.

GOAL 3: SAFE AND CONNECTED CAMPUS

Goal statement. By June 2028, Mission Creek High School will reduce chronic absenteeism and suspensions and increase student connection to adults on campus. Students will gather data on campus patterns and lead the response alongside adults through the PLUS Program.

LCAP goal alignment. Del Arroyo Unified LCAP Goal 2, Safe and Engaged Schools (state priorities 5 and 6).

IDENTIFIED NEED

Chronic absenteeism at Mission Creek is 6.6 points above the district high school rate. English learners and socioeconomically disadvantaged students have the highest rates of chronic absenteeism and suspension. One in nine sampled students reported being bullied on campus in the last 30 days, well above the Direction norm. Students linked conflict and exclusion between students to missed school. The PBIS and MTSS teams lack a monthly source of student input to explain their data.

ANNUAL MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

METRIC/INDICATOR	BASELINE/ACTUAL OUTCOME	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Chronic absenteeism, all students (DataQuest)	26.4% (2025-26)	23.0% (2027-28)
Chronic absenteeism, English learners (DataQuest)	31.2% (2025-26)	27.0% (2027-28)
Suspension rate, all students (Dashboard)	7.3% (2025-26)	6.0% (2027-28)
Suspension rate, socioeconomically disadvantaged students (Dashboard)	8.6% (2025-26)	7.0% (2027-28)

METRIC/INDICATOR	BASELINE/ACTUAL OUTCOME	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Sampled students reporting they were bullied on campus in the last 30 days (Direction, average of nine cycles)	10.8% (February 2027 pilot)	8.5% (2027-28)
Sampled students reporting an adult on campus checked in with them in the last 30 days (Direction)	54% (February 2027 pilot)	62% (2027-28)
PLUS cycle reports delivered to the principal, PBIS team, MTSS team and SSC	0 (2026-27)	9 (2027-28)

Writer's note. The SPSA sets an expected outcome for one year. Update the baseline each year. Choose metrics your SSC can track during the year. Direction draws a new representative sample each cycle. Its results describe the campus and never individual students. Keep Direction items in the "In the last 30 days" form so each item measures experiences. Include at least one metric for the student groups your needs assessment identified. Do not use reading scores or academic achievement results as PLUS outcomes.

STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES

STRATEGY/ACTIVITY #	DESCRIPTION	STUDENTS TO BE SERVED	PROPOSED EXPENDITURES
3.1	**PLUS Program class and schoolwide cycle.** Implement the PLUS Program as a year-long class section with a PLUS Team of 25 to 30 students. The team runs the 30-day cycle nine times a year and reports each cycle's data to the principal, counselors, PBIS team, MTSS team, SSC and district office.	All students (schoolwide)	$12,000 Title I, Part A (0.1 FTE Advisor collaboration). $12,000 LCFF supplemental and concentration (0.1 FTE PLUS class section). $3,495 Title I, Part A (PLUS Program first year).
3.2	**PLUS staff team and Advisor preparation.** Send the PLUS staff team to the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training. Send the Advisor to the June PLUS Advisor Institute in Temecula.	All students (schoolwide)	$1,200 Title I, Part A (substitute release). $1,495 Title I, Part A (Institute registration). $750 Title I, Part A (Institute lodging). $250 Title I, Part A (Institute travel).
3.3	**Schoolwide engagement activities.** The PLUS Team leads activities the campus needs based on each cycle's data. The team serves as liaison to the school wellness center through QR code campaigns, self-referral information and work to reduce stigma.	All students (schoolwide)	$1,000 Title I, Part A (materials and supplies).

Strategy 3.1 detail. PLUS (Peer Leaders Uniting Students) is an evidence-based school climate program used in California schools for about 25 years. It uses youth participatory action research. Students gather and analyze data about their own school and lead the response alongside adults. The Advisor selects the PLUS Team to reflect the student body, including English learners and newcomer students. Members are not elected and hold no offices. The district prioritizes student leadership by funding the class section in the master schedule.

The cycle begins with an August pre-cycle where students learn the process. Cycle 1 starts in September.

1. **Protective factors.** The PLUS Team leads youth development activities during the school day that build connection and belonging.
2. **Data integration.** Direction surveys a new representative sample of less than 10 percent of the campus with the same questions each cycle. A student-facilitated Forum gathers qualitative data from 40 to 50 students, a new group each month. Forum participants identify the issues, how those issues affect students and what can be done. The Forum identifies the top four critical issues.
3. **Action planning.** Students review both kinds of data and plan the activities the campus needs. The cycle report goes to the principal, counselors, PBIS and MTSS teams and the district office.
4. **Engagement.** Students carry out the activities with the campus, share the data with the school community and measure again the next cycle.

The PLUS staff team includes an assistant principal, the PBIS lead and the Advisor. The Advisor is funded at 0.2 FTE. That covers the class section plus 0.1 FTE for collaboration. The collaboration time lets the Advisor serve on the PBIS team, the MTSS team and the school safety committee. The Advisor brings each cycle's data to those teams and carries their decisions back to the class. This link connects student voice to the tiered supports the school already runs.

Strategy 3.3 detail. PLUS Team members do not counsel or mediate other students. Their role with the wellness center is to make its services known and to reduce the stigma of asking for help. Activities come from the needs each cycle's data shows. The Direction activity resource database lists schoolwide activities by category. Dances, rallies and other fun activities are not counted as part of this strategy.

Evidence base. CDE defines moderate evidence (Level 2) as evidence based on at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study. A quasi-experimental study with propensity score matching followed 153 students in a year-long PLUS elective at six high schools in one California district. Participation significantly improved attendance compared to similar peers. Related research examines how youth participatory action research integrated into schoolwide PBIS can prevent bullying and improve school climate.

1. "Youth Participatory Action Research in the High School Curriculum: Education Outcomes for Student Participants in a District-Wide Initiative." *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness.* PDF
2. Abraczinskas, M., Kornbluh, M., Golden, A. R., Glende, J., Velez, V., Vines, E., and Ozer, E. J. (2022). "Preventing Bullying and Improving School Climate Through Integrating Youth Participatory Action

Research Into School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports." *Journal of Prevention and Health Promotion,* 3(2). PDF

3. Cohen, A. K., Ozer, E. J., Abraczinskas, M., Voight, A., Kirshner, B., and Devinney, M. (2019). "Opportunities for Youth Participatory Action Research to Inform School District Decisions." *Evidence and Policy.* PDF
4. Gauna, R. (2017). "The Peer Leaders Uniting Students (PLUS) Program: The Impact on School Climate, Student Engagement, and Student Mentoring." Doctoral dissertation, Concordia University Irvine. PDF

Research teams at UC Berkeley, the University of Oregon and the University of Florida continue to study PLUS. A five-year University of Oregon study of student voice in California high schools, funded by the William T. Grant Foundation, is underway.

> **Writer's note.** The template table holds the strategy number, a description, the students served and the proposed expenditures with funding sources. In a schoolwide program every strategy can serve all students. Write each description so an SSC parent can picture what happens on campus. Present PLUS as the mechanism that brings student data into your PBIS and MTSS work. Every schoolwide activity must be evidence-based, and CDE uses four levels: strong, moderate, promising and a rationale-based approach. Cite PLUS at moderate evidence (Tier 2) and link the studies. Do not describe PLUS as counseling, crisis response, mediation or mental health referral.

BUDGET FOR GOAL 3

The Advisor cost uses an illustrative salary and benefits of $120,000. At 0.2 FTE that is $24,000 a year. Substitute and materials costs are illustrative local estimates.

LINE ITEM	FUNDING SOURCE	2027-28
PLUS Advisor, 0.1 FTE collaboration (0.1 x $120,000)	Title I, Part A	$12,000
PLUS Advisor, 0.1 FTE PLUS class section (0.1 x $120,000)	LCFF supplemental and concentration	$12,000
PLUS Program, first year	Title I, Part A	$3,495
Substitute release for 2-Day training, 3 staff x 2 days x $200 (illustrative)	Title I, Part A	$1,200
PLUS Advisor Institute registration	Title I, Part A	$1,495
Advisor Institute lodging, 3 nights x $250	Title I, Part A	$750
Advisor Institute travel	Title I, Part A	$250
Engagement activity materials and supplies (illustrative)	Title I, Part A	$1,000

LINE ITEM	FUNDING SOURCE	2027-28
Total Goal 3		**$32,190**
Title I, Part A subtotal		$20,190
LCFF supplemental and concentration subtotal		$12,000

Three-year projection. The SPSA budgets one year at a time. The SSC used this projection to plan.

LINE ITEM	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	TOTAL
PLUS Advisor, 0.2 FTE	$24,000	$24,000	$24,000	$72,000
PLUS Program, first year	$3,495	$0	$0	$3,495
PLUS subscription, three-year agreement	$0	$1,495	$1,495	$2,990
Substitute release for 2-Day training	$1,200	$0	$0	$1,200
Advisor Institute registration, lodging and travel	$2,495	$0	$0	$2,495
Engagement activity materials and supplies	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$3,000
Total	**$32,190**	**$26,495**	**$26,495**	**$85,180**
Title I, Part A	$20,190	$14,495	$14,495	$49,180
LCFF supplemental and concentration	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$36,000

BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. **PLUS Advisor, 0.2 FTE ($24,000 a year).** The 0.1 FTE class section is funded by LCFF supplemental and concentration funds through the master schedule. The 0.1 FTE collaboration time is funded by Title I. It lets the Advisor serve on the PBIS team, MTSS team and school safety committee. The Advisor brings cycle data to each team and carries decisions back to the class.
2. **PLUS Program first year ($3,495).** This includes the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training for a staff team of up to four (a fifth attends free). It also includes the online subscription with unlimited Direction and the activity resource database, the PLUS curriculum and one School Climate Conference or School Safety Conference registration. The 2-Day training prepares the staff team to run the program schoolwide.
3. **PLUS subscription in Years 2 and 3 ($1,495 a year).** A three-year agreement sets the yearly price at $1,495, a 25 percent saving over the $1,995 year-to-year price. Each year includes the subscription, one conference registration and one 2-Day training registration for a new staff member.
4. **Substitute release ($1,200).** Three staff team members who teach or counsel are released for the two days of the 2-Day training. The administrator does not need a substitute.

5. **PLUS Advisor Institute ($2,495).** The Institute is held each June in Temecula. It prepares the Advisor to teach the PLUS class and lead its activities. Registration is $1,495 for a first attendance. The Institute provides lunches and refreshments. The school covers three nights of lodging at $250 and $250 in travel. Renewal at $995 is due every three years.
6. **Engagement activity materials ($1,000 a year).** These supplies support the activities each cycle's data calls for, such as poster campaigns and wellness center QR code materials.
7. **Not budgeted.** PLUS Team student leadership training is optional and carries an added cost. The school will request a quote before adding it.

> **Writer's note: supplement, not supplant.** Title I funds must supplement, not supplant, state and local funds. Each Title I cost must also be reasonable, necessary and allocable. In this sample the district funds the PLUS class section from LCFF, as it funds other elective sections. Title I pays for the added collaboration time, training and materials that make the schoolwide program work. Your district's Title I office applies its own supplement-not-supplant methodology under ESSA Section 1118(b). Confirm with them how to fund the Advisor time before the SSC votes. Title I funds must be used in the current federal fiscal year or the one after.
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> **Writer's note: consolidation of funds.** A schoolwide program may consolidate federal, state and local funds to upgrade the whole school program. A school that consolidates does not need separate fiscal records by program. It must still show that the schoolwide program serves the intent and purposes of each consolidated program. If your district consolidates funds in schoolwide schools, your budget may show PLUS under consolidated schoolwide funds instead of separate Title I and LCFF lines. Ask your Title I office which method your district uses.

ANNUAL REVIEW

At the end of 2027-28, the SSC will complete the template's Analysis for Goal 3. It will describe overall implementation and the effectiveness of Strategies 3.1 to 3.3. It will explain any major differences between intended implementation and budgeted expenditures. It will describe any changes to the goal, outcomes, metrics or strategies. The SSC will use the year's nine cycle reports, Direction trends and DataQuest attendance and discipline data as its evidence. The 2028-29 SPSA will update each baseline with 2027-28 results.

> **Writer's note.** A schoolwide program must evaluate implementation and results each year and revise the plan as needed. PLUS cycle reports give the SSC a record of what students found and what the campus did in response, month by month. Plan now for when the SSC will see them.

SOURCES

- CDE: Schoolwide Programs
- CDE: Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program Requirements
- CDE: Title I, Part A Authorized Use of Funds
- CDE: SPSA Plan Summary for Federal School Improvement Planning
- CDE: Planning for the LCAP and School Plan
- CDE: Local Control and Accountability Plan and SPSA templates
- CDE: CSI LEA Authorized Use of Funds (ESSA evidence levels)