

TTCF Therapist Funds  
\$10,000

Kim Bradley <kbradley@ttusd.org>

## 2022 Community Grant Cycle Follow Up Notification

1 message

**Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation** <administrator@grantinterface.com>

Mon, Dec 12, 2022 at 9:15 AM

Reply-To: phyllis@ttcf.net

To: kbradley@ttusd.org

Cc: phyllis@ttcf.net

Hi Kim,

Congratulations again for being selected as a recipient of our 2022 TTCF Community Grant Cycle. By now you should have received your grant check. As mentioned in the first notification, we're proud to be supporting the work of your organization and are providing this unrestricted funding in furtherance of your mission for the Tahoe/Truckee program. TTCF trusts in the judgment of your organization to use the dollars in whatever manner you see fit.

While there are no formal evaluation requirements for this funding, TTCF requests when recognizing this grant that the use of the "Supported by TTCF" logo and messaging will be included in at least 3 of the specific formats outlined below.

- Apply logo to website
- Shout-out on social media
- Acknowledge in press
- Acknowledge in annual report or print products
- Feature in a storytelling article

The "Supported by TTCF" logo may be downloaded by clicking on the "For Grant Recipients" section in the following link: <https://www.ttcf.net/media-kit/>

If you have any questions, please call (530)587-1776 or email [phyllis@ttcf.net](mailto:phyllis@ttcf.net).

Thank you and Happy Holidays!  
Phyllis McConn  
TTCF Community Impact Officer



**Briefly tell us about your success this year. You may mention up to 3 topics, whether at a governance, organizational, or community impact level.**

Since launching the TTUSD Wellness Program in 2012, we have expanded to include full-time Wellness Centers in our middle and high schools, Coordinated Care Teams with multi-tiered systems of support in most of our elementary and all of our middle school and high school sites, a robust K-12 Social Emotional Learning Curriculum (Second Step, RULER, Link Crew, WEB, Breaking Down the Walls, Hope Squad, Trauma Informed Practices, Restorative Practices, Mindfulness), strong linkages to a hub of Community Collaborative of Tahoe Truckee (CCTT) mental health resources, and most recently, School Social Workers and school-based therapists in our middle and high schools. This past year, we were able to dramatically expand our mental health services to respond to the high number of students who have been struggling during the Covid 19 pandemic. We are now able to provide more comprehensive supports to our highest needs students by providing immediate short-term therapy, providing case management, and making referrals to the CCTT partner services. TTUSD continues to adapt and respond to the growing educational, health, and social emotional needs of our students and families.

**What has been challenging over the past year? Briefly tell us about the biggest challenges you face in achieving your mission. You may mention up to 3 topics.**

This past year we were excited to get back to a regular school schedule, but we didn't anticipate all the challenges we would face. From wearing masks and everyone being frequently quarantined, to all of us relearning how to be back together in a school community, it turned out to be a very challenging year. The pandemic led to increased absences, interruption in learning, more family struggles, and more social isolation. We saw an increase in anxiety, depression, emotional dysregulation, and disruptive student behaviors. There was also pressure on teachers to make up for lost learning time. The teachers were already burned out from having to navigate the challenges of teaching during a pandemic and then were faced with even greater stress trying to resume some sense of normalcy while closing the learning gap.

As a school district, we continue to be challenged by staffing shortages and keeping staff morale up. The Covid 19 pandemic has taken a toll on everyone but our school staff have been hit hard. They worked continuously through lock downs, distance learning and quarantines, and had to pivot multiple times to the changing landscape, growing student needs, and demands placed on them as educators. The focus of our recent back to school Convocation was "Better Together" where we celebrated our school staff, were inspired, and left e-energized to work together to provide the best school year yet. While it has not been easy, our school staff have risen to these challenges and are educating and supporting students in more dynamic, creative, and holistic ways.

This includes not only providing the one-on-one counseling or mental health services that many students require, but also offering opportunities for all students to learn emotional awareness, practice self-regulation, build resilience, and know when and how to seek further help should they need it.

**What is your vision for the upcoming year? Describe your vision for the next year and list up to three goals you hope to accomplish.**

The vision of TTUSD is to make this our best school year yet! We have learned so much over these last few years and feel better equipped to meet the growing academic, mental health, and social emotional needs of our students while continuing to foster a diverse, challenging, and engaging learning environment for all.

The vision of the TTUSD Wellness Program is for our schools to become "Centers of Wellness" (Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission - MHSAAC, 2020) where students' mental, social and emotional needs are supported so they can learn and thrive. This will look different at each school site but will include a robust Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum and access to critical Mental Health Services through school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers and school therapists at each school site. Students will learn emotional awareness, practice self-regulation, build resilience, and know when and how to seek further help should they need it.

Goal 1: We plan to expand our SEL Curriculum at every grade level. We will be contracting with an SEL Specialist to support each school site in deepening their SEL curriculums to strengthen students' coping strategies, build stronger relationships, and nurture a positive school climate.

Goal 2: Expand our School Social Worker Program to include Elementary School Social Workers. Last year, we launched a pilot Social Worker Program in our middle and high schools to help students access a holistic system of supports to improve their mental health and stay engaged in school. TTUSD has committed to growing this program by adding two more Social Workers to support the Lakeside and Truckee Elementary Schools.

Goal 3: Expand the School Based Therapist Program. In response to the high demand for student mental health supports during the Covid 19 pandemic, we contracted with local therapists to come to the schools to provide mental health supports for our middle and high school students. We plan to continue these supports one day a week at each middle and high school this school year.

**As a community foundation, we are dedicated to addressing racial and social equity across our nonprofit sector and the entire community. What is your organization currently doing to address equity?**

TTUSD values racial and social equity and is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and diverse learning environment for all.

This year, TTUSD has identified increasing supports for our EL and Immigrant students and families as one of our highest priorities in our upcoming LCAP (Local Control and Accountability Plan).

The pandemic exacerbated existing inequities for our low income and BIPOC (Black Indigenous People of Color) students. In particular, our English Learners (EL) were impacted by the challenges of distance learning, lost learning time, family stressors, and decreased social connections. The TTUSD Wellness Program has been very intentional about outreaching to our English Learner students so they feel welcomed in the school Wellness Centers and have equitable access to supports. We are working with our TTUSD Translation and Bilingual Community Services Department to increase our outreach and connection with EL students who could benefit from Wellness and Mental Health supports. This past school year, 58% of TTUSD middle and high school EL students accessed Wellness Services. We are strategizing ways to increase this number this school year.

We also recognize the need to increase our outreach and education efforts to our Spanish speaking families. This past spring, we partnered with the Boys and Girls Club to host a Spanish Parent Mental Health Night in Kings Beach to educate Spanish speaking parents on ways to support their children's mental health and get connected to school and community resources. It was a very successful event and we plan to offer it for Truckee Spanish speaking families this Fall.

**As TTCF considers topics for future workshops, is there a business or capacity building topic that would be useful to your staff or board?**

1. Support in accessing new state mental health funding streams.
2. Strategies to increase staff morale.

**Amount of Request:** \$10,000

**Does this grant request involve working in collaboration with other nonprofits or further your efforts with any current coalitions?**

The TTUSD Wellness Program is part of several CCTT Coalitions focused on improving the mental well-being of students. In particular, this grant will further the efforts of the following initiatives:

Tahoe Forest Hospital ACEs Coalition - By increasing the number of School Therapists, we will be able to increase student access to critical mental health supports. This supports the ACEs Coalition's Goal of Reducing Barriers in Accessing Care due to the lack of Behavioral Health providers. This effort is a creative way to maximize Associate Therapists needing to get their hours while serving our highest needs students in a timely manner.

Suicide Prevention Coalition - By offering immediate mental health supports to students on campus we will be able to reduce the number of students who struggle with undiagnosed depression which may lead to suicidal ideation. This effort is in alignment with the Suicide Prevention Coalition's goal of reducing youth suicide in our community and providing access to mental health supports.

**Would a grant from TTCF for this request provide matching funds for an existing match you are trying to reach or could you use it to leverage a match opportunity?**

Yes

We have the opportunity to apply for Katz Amsterdam funding which could be used as a matching fund if appropriate.

**What is the issue?**

**For consideration for specific program or project support, explain the situation – opportunity, problem, issue, need, etc. – that your work addresses. Why is it uniquely yours to undertake? For capacity building, explain why now is the time in the history of your organization to take the step(s) you envision. If applying for core operating support, explain why your organization is critical for our community.**

Before 2020, 1 in 5 kids (3-17yrs) reported a mental, emotional or behavioral health disorder (CDC) and the pandemic has only exasperated this issue. A growing number of students are experiencing isolation, fear, anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation which is often compounded by complex family issues. Students face a range of stressors on a daily basis, ranging from acute trauma and mental health crises to general stress and anxiety. The 2021 TTUSD California Healthy Kids Survey reported that 36% of 7th graders, 34% of 9th graders and 41% of 11th graders felt sad and hopeless within the past 12 months. In December 2021, the US Surgeon General issued an advisory on mental health among youth, calling it an “urgent public health crisis” that’ll require an all hands-on deck effort to address (12/14/21 HHS). Additionally, a 2022 report from the U.S. Department of Education reported that 80 percent of parents and 77 percent of teachers expressed concern for students’ social, emotional, and mental health (NCES, 2022).

As the primary place where young people spend a significant amount of their lives, we have a unique opportunity to provide direct mental health supports to students at school which will reduce barriers to access, such as: insurance, transportation, and limited therapist availability. We have responded to this "urgent public health crisis" by significantly increasing our social emotional and mental health supports over the last two years, including: opening Middle School Wellness Centers, launching a School Social Worker Program, and contracting with School Therapists. We are committed to growing these programs to create holistic Centers of Wellness at each of our school sites.

**What do you want to do?**

**(Otherwise known as goals, objectives, and methods)**

**If applying for project/program funding:**

- **Describe the specific activities for which you seek funding and who will carry out the activities.**
- **Tell us your overall goal(s), steps you will take to meet your goal(s), and the time line in which this will take place.**

We are requesting \$10,000 to support the cost of contracting with local therapists to provide immediate, short-term therapeutic services to TTUSD students one day a week in each of our middle and high schools. We are planning to contract with two associate therapists who are working toward their licensure hours and will be supervised by our School Social Worker, LCSW. It's a win win because we are able to access associate therapists who have more availability and do not charge as much, and they get experience working with students in the schools and receiving their supervision hours. It is a creative way to meet the immediate mental health needs of our students in an affordable way. This program has given associate therapists the opportunity to gain meaningful experience and work towards their clinical licenses which will benefit students and the community in the long run by having a larger pool of qualified therapists to refer to. This also provides timely mental health supports for our students who are struggling without having to navigate complicated health insurance plans, limited therapist availability, and high costs. This is only short-term therapy so it is not the answer for all students but it gets them connected to a mental health specialist right away to provide support, assess their mental health needs, and refer them to long-term mental health services if needed. The School Therapists work closely with our School Social Workers to help students and their families navigate complicated insurance options.

**Our goal is to provide school-based therapeutic services at TTUSD middle and high schools one day a week at each site to increase the accessibility and affordability of treatment for students in need.**

### **Action Steps**

- Contract with two associate therapists and provide supervision
- Provide therapeutic counseling services to 15 TTUSD students
- Research and secure additional funding to sustain School Therapists and School Social Workers Programs.

### **Timeline**

We plan to contract with two therapists in October. These funds will support the longevity of the program and allow us to offer therapeutic supports until the end of the school year.

**Explain how the proposed activities will benefit the community and how you will know the community benefited. Be as clear as you can about the result(s) you expect to achieve.**

### **Outcomes**

- 15 TTUSD students will receive therapeutic services that will increase their mental health, emotional well-being, and connection to school and community supports.
- A TTUSD Mental Health Sustainability Plan will be created with funding streams identified.

We have already seen the benefit of the School Therapist Program. It has proven to be a successful model that provides immediate mental health supports to students in need, utilizes associate therapists with increased availability, decreases barriers to access, and connects students to long-term mental health interventions.

We plan to track progress made towards outcomes by:

- Tracking School Therapists notes and administering a student survey at the end of services.
- The creation of a TTUSD Mental Health Sustainability Plan.

Through a coordinated approach between the school district, Nevada and Placer Counties, Tahoe Forest Hospital, and the Community Collaborative of Tahoe Truckee partners, TTUSD students have access to comprehensive health and wellness supports. Each school site has a robust SEL curriculum, School Counselor(s), School Psychologist, and access to mental health services and supports. In addition, the middle schools and high schools have Coordinated Care Teams with multi-tiered systems of support, student focused Wellness Centers, School Social Workers, and School Therapists. The Wellness Program also coordinates Peer Mentor Programs, student support groups, and a variety of educational workshops. Through both on-campus programming and community-based partnerships, students receive coordinated health education, screenings, counseling, and other supportive services to improve their mental and emotional health.

In particular, the middle school and high school Wellness Centers support students who are struggling with Anxiety by teaching them self regulation, self soothing, and mindfulness techniques so they can calm their bodies down and reset while at school. The Wellness Centers also serve as the center of the Wellness Hub of mental health resources and referrals.