Education Innovation and Research Program (EIR)
Project Abstract

Applicant Name: Sesame Workshop

Project Title: Sesame Street in Communities

Type of Grant Requested: (select one) ☒ Early-Phase ☐ Mid-Phase ☐ Expansion-Phase

Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

☒ Absolute Priority 1—Demonstrate a Rationale (Early), Moderate (Mid), Strong (Expansion)
☐ Absolute Priority 2-- Field-Initiated Innovations—General
☐ Absolute Priority 3-- Field-Initiated Innovations—Promoting (STEM) Education
☒ Absolute Priority 4-- Field-Initiated Innovations—Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs

Competitive Preference Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

☒ Competitive Preference Priority 1—Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities

☒ Competitive Preference Priority 2-- Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty

Total number of students to be served by the project: 1,134

Grade level(s) to be served by the project: Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd

Your definition of high-need students: Students attending Title I eligible schools who have been identified through a data-driven needs assessment, conducted in partnership with school leadership and Communities In Schools site coordinators.

Brief description of proposed project, including project activities: The proposed project will train and equip Communities In Schools site coordinators with high-quality child- and caregiver-facing resources to support improved social emotional competencies and resiliency against adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Implementation will occur in 12-week cycles with site coordinators engaging with case management, high need students around topic modules and working with teachers and school leadership to identify the best pathway to engage with caregivers on these same topics and issues. American Institutes for Research will conduct a rigorous evaluation to determine the impact of this implementation model on student (social emotional competencies, reading achievement, school engagement), site coordinator (self-efficacy), and caregiver (self-efficacy) outcomes. The proposed project will build on promising findings from a pilot in West Virginia, conducted at the height of COVID-19 disruption.

Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes: The project will seek to – Increase self-efficacy among caregivers and site coordinators to support students in Grades K-2 cope with adverse childhood experiences. – Increase students' social and emotional skills including self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship skills, decision-making, among others -–Increase attendance at school

as a proxy for school engagement and – Increase in foundational language and literacy skills and reading proficiency.

Describe how the proposed project is <u>innovative</u>: The proposed project is innovative in the way in which it advances and builds upon a promising approach to social emotional learning in young children. The emergent model presented in this proposal brings together the highest quality, engaging early learning resources available – from the creators of Sesame Street – and an implementing partner (Communities In Schools) with deep roots in the communities where they work yet with the potential for national scale. It builds on learnings and feedback from both organizations who collectively have decades of experience focused on improving student outcomes. The success of a pilot in West Virginia and the possibility of replicating and validating that success in Nevada and North Carolina will expand the evidence base for these types of interventions and provide a platform for this model to reach more providers and more children in other regions and states.

Identify other studies and/practice related to the proposed project: The rationale for this project is derived from the following studies: Sesame Workshop (2001) Sesame Street in Communities and Communities In Schools: Findings from a Pilot Program in West Virginia; Dahlke, K., White, L., Tucker, N., Williams, A., Johnson, C., Ptak, C. (2019). Sesame Street in Communities Pilot Study. Chicago, IL: American Institutes for Research.; Dahlke, K., Anthony, J., Tucker, N., Fain, G., Carbuccia-Abott, A., Ptak, C.,Sturgis, L. (2021).Impact Study of Sesame Street in Communities Parental Addiction Resources: Final Report.Chicago, IL: American Institutes for Research.; and Oades-Sese, G. V., Cahill, A., Allen, J. W. P., Rubic, W. L., & Mahmood, N. (2021). Effectiveness of Sesame Workshop's Little Children, Big Challenges: A digital media SEL intervention for preschool classrooms. Psychology in the Schools, 58(10), 2041-2067.

Proposed implementation sites: 58 schools in Nevada and North Carolina. █████████

List all organizations partnering with this project: Communities In Schools will be the project's lead implementing partner through their affiliates in Nevada and North Carolina. American Institutes for Research will be the project's external evaluator.