

**Early-Phase Competition Absolute Priority 4 (SEL)
Human Restoration Project
S411C230217**

Third Coast Learning Collaborative: Developing an Inquiry-Driven Model of School

Early-Phase Competition Absolute Priority 4 (SEL)

Orchard View School District

ED-GRANTS-052323-004

Third Coast Learning Collaborative: Developing an Inquiry-Driven Model of School

Absolute Priorities: #1, #4 | **Competitive Priority:** #1

Total Number of Students Served: 600 | **Grade Levels Served:** Grades 6-7

Definition of high-needs students: Students who are often marginalized in social and emotional learning (SEL) initiatives and/or struggling academically, encompassing students from historically marginalized backgrounds, individuals learning English as a second language, Disabled youth and those with unique learning needs, and those facing economic hardships.

Project description and activities: The proposed Project (“Third Coast Learning Collaborative”) will implement a “school within a school” cohort, implementing practices, structures, systems, and policies with educators focused on interdisciplinary project-based learning and portfolio-based, feedback-driven assessment centered on improving social-emotional health and academic achievement. Human Restoration Project, a nonprofit organization, will lead integration of this cohort within two public school districts in Muskegon, Michigan. This cohort will develop a separate schedule, assessment system, curriculum, and pedagogical approach that centers student self-direction, hands-on learning and social-emotional well-being. The Project will implement the model with 2 public middle schools, by randomizing students in 6th grade to participate in the inquiry-driven school or traditional school model across two cohorts (n=150 students per school per year). Both schools will implement the model across 6th-7th grade, which will include partnering with a local community college to connect inquiry-driven learning with a work-based, career driven model.

Project objectives and expected outcomes: The evaluation team will use Analyses of Covariance with data across both years for each cohort to test the project hypotheses that, compared to students in tradition school, students in the inquiry-driven school will: (1) be more engaged in school; (2) have higher quality relationships with their teachers and peers; and (3) experience higher academic achievement and psychological well-being, and decreased absenteeism and behavioral and emotional problems. Furthermore, we will use moderation and mediation analyses to test our hypotheses that student outcomes will be (4) moderated by demographic characteristics (e.g., high needs) and (5)