



Peer Health Exchange Trip Report  
Mendez High School, Los Angeles, CA  
March 21, 2019

### Program Visited

- Peer Health Exchange, Mendez High School, Boyle Heights Los Angeles

### Focusing Philanthropy Staff

- Parnia Banki
- Teresa Burton
- Lauren Kovnat

### Peer Health Exchange Staff

- Melanie – CSUN

### Peer Health Exchange (PHE)

#### Background

- PHE has a staff of four people, LaDawn Jeff, Cynthia, and Rey. Mario is in a 10-month internship program that started in November 2018.
- Participating colleges sending teachers this year are: CSUN, USC and Occidental
- LAUSD allowed PHE in their schools in January so the program started later. Jordan was the first LAUSD approved school. Mendez is also an LAUSD school.
- They are piloting a 7-week program, teaching the first 7 workshops:
  - Introduction
  - Identity
  - 2 classes on resources
  - Mental health

#### Program Visit

- The student body at Mendez is primarily Latino.
- Workshops at Mendez are taught to approximately 300, 9<sup>th</sup> grade students consisting of 13 classes of 20 to 25 students. The program works best in smaller classes of 40 students or less.
- PHE rolled out a relationship centered model (RCM) this year – the same volunteer teaches the entire 7 workshops as opposed to specific modules. Rationale: one person can't be an expert in all modules, so RCM uses video clips – videos with voiceover.
- Topic: School-based health center and community clinics- Today's video described the inside of a clinic and how to access services – how to speak to receptionist, meet a nurse, etc.
- We observed a class of 19 students. The workshop was the 4<sup>th</sup> in the series and was being held during 6<sup>th</sup> period English class. The English teacher, Mr. Ball was present and sitting at his desk.
- The PHE teacher was Melanie. She taught by herself because the class is small, and her co-teacher was pulled to teach in another school.
- The students were well-behaved and engaged probably due in part to the small class size, the presence of the English teacher, and a confident, experienced workshop teacher
  - Mendez only has a nurse, not a health center





## Focusing Philanthropy

- Types of services provided at SBHC and clinics
- How to seek help - what questions ask and how to answer before seeking help
- What clinics look like - various individuals and roles – showed video walking them through a clinic
- Role-playing exercise – students acted out the roles of students and doctors with a worksheet with prompts for questions and answers

## Volunteer

- Melanie has taught for PHE for 4 years
- She is a senior at Northridge majoring in Biochem/Pre-med
- She was immediately attracted to PHE opportunity. Said she was shy and never thought she could teach and loves it now. She went to school in Thousand Oaks and didn't have Health Ed growing up.
- Melanie was very comfortable in class and seemed to have a good rapport with the students. She was confident, comfortable with students, they trust her, know her. She managed the class well by herself and it may have been helpful to have the English teacher there as well.

## Key Observations

- PHE is important because it's where the rubber meets the road. They add value by showing students how to use the health clinics to get help, understand and actually use the free resources. For example, without PHE:
  - Will students use these health centers?
  - Will they say they're depressed? (Maybe they can't go to parents and say these things).
  - They can get condoms, etc.
- The linkage of knowledge to health resources is critical at this age.
- It would be helpful for PHE to track school nurse visits or clinic visits while still respecting privacy

