

MICRO GRANT PROJECT:

Growing Together Healing-Centered Practices for School Communities

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Communities In Schools of Central Texas





Content Synopsis

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WHY was this project needed?

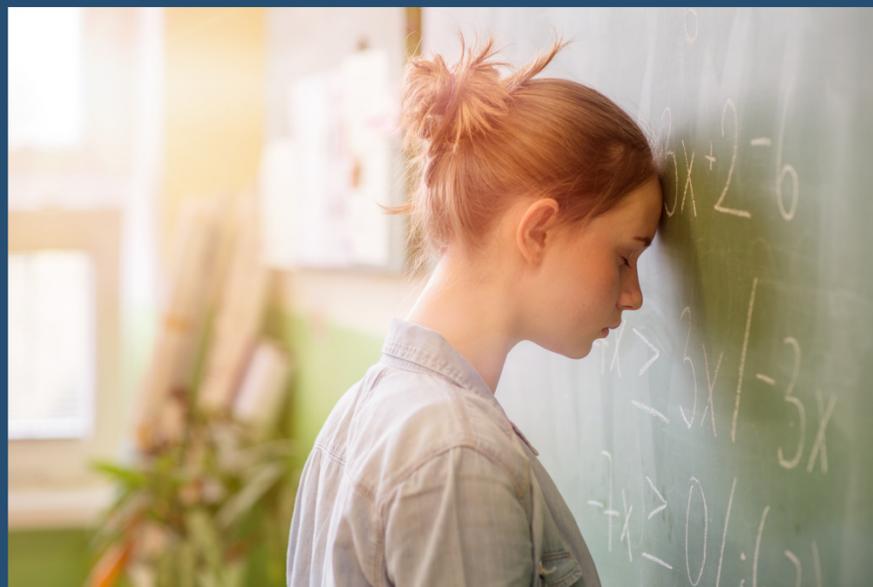
During the 2020-2021 school year, Metz-Sanchez staff and faculty faced a great amount of stress, uncertainty, disagreement, and fear caused by:

- Merging of two very different school populations--
 - One predominantly of new immigrants (mostly Spanish speakers) with a wall to wall Dual Language program.
 - One consisting of multigeneration Americans, where a significant portion families do not agree with their students participating in the Dual Language Program, who lost their entire school leadership team and many tenured teachers.
- Closure of a school whose families have attended for many generations,
- Students and families being severely impacted due to COVID-19 including job losses, unstable housing, food access, transportation, ect.,
- Racial separation within the school campus,
- Job insecurity,
- Negative effects of gentrification including families completely losing their homes,
- Culture shock being experienced by our community as the two schools unite into one,
- Support shortage,
- Teaching students in person and virtually



Questions to teachers:

WHAT DO YOU WISH OTHERS KNEW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE RIGHT NOW?



"I wish it was easier to process covid and the pandemic currently. We are at a year and I feel like it is harder now than ever, but since we are non-stop teaching we do not have the space as teachers to process. We are helping our students process, feel safe, cared for, etc, but we are left to do it all alone. I also wish it was considered more normal to share personal struggles with co-workers. It can feel really lonely right now due to the isolation of everything. On top of that, there is a constant feeling of not being good enough for my students, not feeling like they are getting the support and learning they need because there is just truly too much to process and do."



What do you wish others knew about your experience right now?

- "I am sad about leaving the campus that I have served for 33 years. Most of my colleagues are already gone, and my immediate professional future is uncertain. So, I am a little anxious about what will happen next year, and where I will be."
- "That I'm doing my best. I feel a lot of stress and definitely feel the pandemic fatigue, but I'm trying to cope with it as best I can."





The WHAT

Project Overview

The Amala Foundation offered a series of opportunities to promote healing practices for community connection and individual's well-being in the face of the collective challenges we are all experiencing.

Native Succulent offered a planting workshop to build community through this self care opportunity.

HOW?



Location

Due to COVID-19 protocols not allowing our facilitators on campus and not being able to gather in large groups, sessions were conducted virtually . The last session was in person in small groups.



Participants

50 Faculty and staff members attended each session in the series.



Time

Participants engaged in 6 hours of training in a 5 session series. Facilitators and campus SEL team engaged in 9 hours of planning.



Grant
approved!
Feb 13

Amala
Session 1:
Body, Mind,
Heart
March 24

Amala
Session 2:
Art, Community
Love & Kindness
Apr 2

Amala
Session 3:
Self Care
Routines
May 6

Amala
Session 4:
Student
Self Care
May 19

Planning
Dec. 15

Planning

Planning

Planning

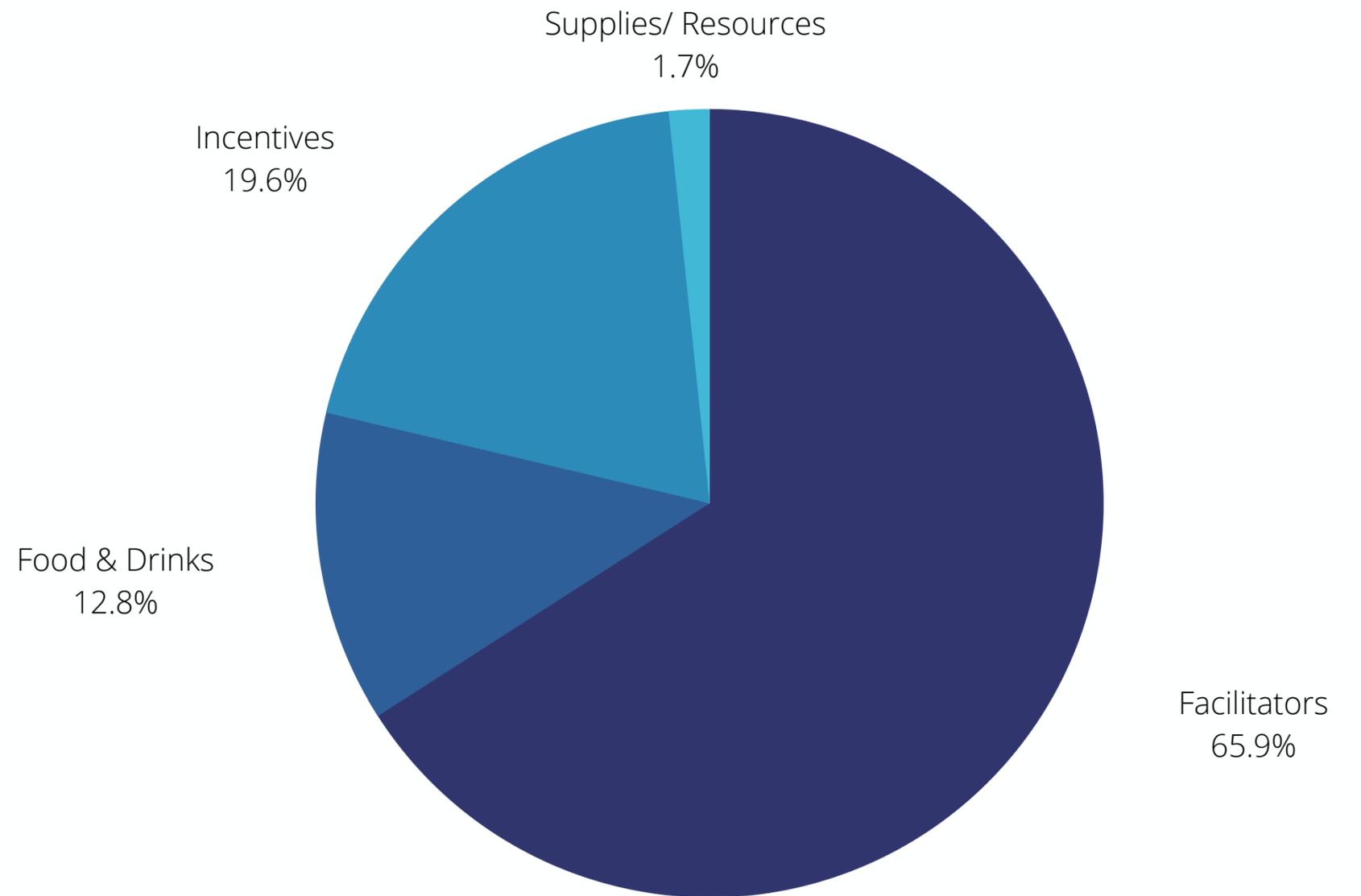
Planning

Succulent Native
Planting event
June 1



TIMELINE

How were funds spent?





Challenges



- ZOOM/ connection issues
- Scheduling conflicts
- Space
- Time available

Successes

WHAT ASPECT OF THE TRAINING DID YOU FIND MOST VALUABLE?

- "Connecting with my coworkers in an authentic way."
- "Modeling of different mindfulness/SEL practices on Zoom, experiencing it from a "student" perspective "
- "The poem that we created together and the quotes. Also the chance to talk with colleagues about ourselves and how we are doing."
- "Not only providing mindfulness activities, but also modeling."
- "Checking in with colleagues to share thoughts and feelings."
- "When a picture was shown and I was able to describe what I felt and no negative feedback or criticism."

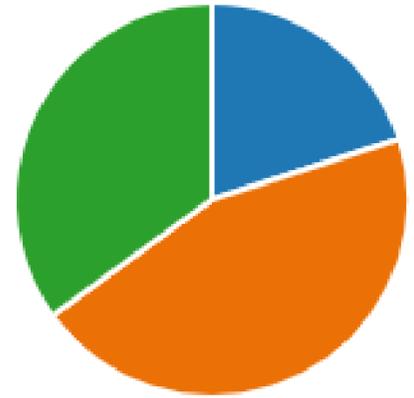
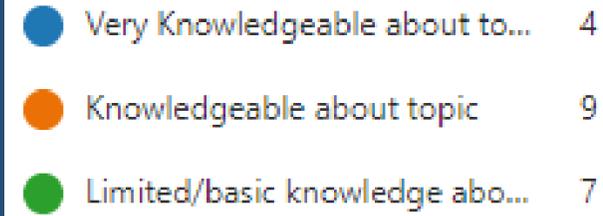
-Metz-Sanchez Faculty Members in an anonymous post series survey



DATA

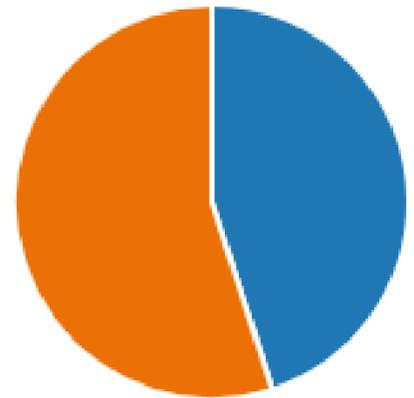
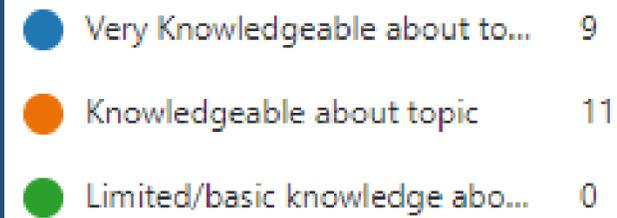
PRIOR to today's workshop, please rate your knowledge about healing practice

[More Details](#)



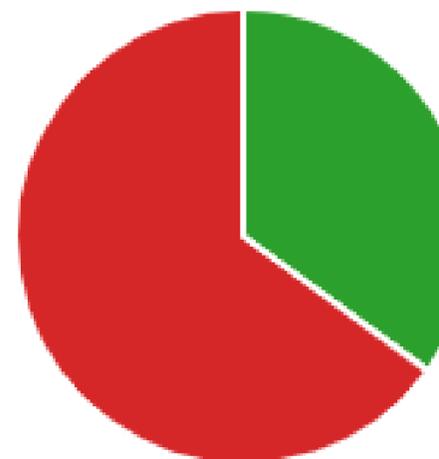
AFTER today's workshop, please rate your knowledge about healing practices.

[More Details](#)



Overall how would you rate your satisfaction with the workshop provided?

[More Details](#)



Looking Forward

WHAT IS ONE THING YOU LEARNED FROM THIS TRAINING THAT YOU WILL INTEGRATE INTO YOUR WORK?

- "Set intentions for the day with the students"
- "The importance of using art, poetry, quotes, and music to self-reflect and feel centered and grounded."
- "To be mindful of the little things that can be overlooked when one is overwhelmed and feeling stressed."
- "Integration of mental breaks with my students."
- "I need to be in peace with myself in this way I can help my students."
- "Take time to reflect and breathe slowly throughout the day. Take time to talk to co-workers just to vent and laugh about the situations. Look for the silver lining in a situation."



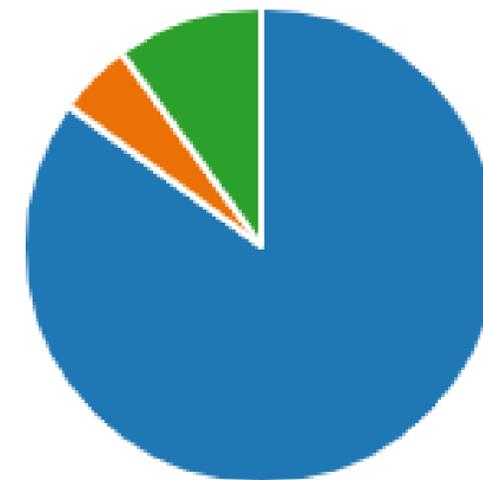
-Metz-Sanchez Faculty Members in an anonymous post series survey

Looking Forward

Would you like to continue similar trainings next school year?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	17
● No	1
● Other	2



Thank you Native Succulents





THANK YOU

**Donors and
Communities In Schools**