



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
AGREEMENT COVER SHEET

Please Type

Contractor full name: Foundation for the Arts and Trauma Inc

Doing Business As, if applicable:

Business Address: 19 Edwards Street, New Haven, CT 06511

Business Phone: 203-624-2146

Funding Source & Acct # including location code: ARP ESSER III Carryover
Funds: 25536399 0012 56694

Principal or Supervisor: Dr. Nicholas Perrone

Agreement Effective Dates: From 09/1/2023 to 06/30/2024.

Hourly rate or per session rate or per day rate. \$112.75/hour

\$451/day per counselor

\$5412 per week for the duration of the year

Total amount: Not to exceed \$65,000.00

Description of Service: Please provide a one or two sentence description of the service. *Please do not write "see attached."*

The Miss Kendra Program will bring in trained drama/trauma counselors to help provide a school-wide approach to addressing trauma, decreasing stress, and encouraging healthy mental health habits.

Submitted by: Dr. Nicholas Perrone Phone: 475-220-8010



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Memorandum

To: New Haven Board of Education Finance and Operations Committee
From: Dr. Nicholas Perrone
Date: June 15, 2023
Re: Foundation for the Arts and Trauma partnership at Edgewood School

Executive Summary/ Statement: (Please provide 1-2 sentences describing the Service – do not leave blank):

Preventive trauma-informed program for all students in grades 1-8 to improve social, emotional and coping skills, de-escalation, and improved academic readiness and more positive attitudes.

Amount of Agreement and the Daily, Hourly or per Session Cost: \$112.75/hr, \$451/day per counselor, \$5412 per week, not to exceed \$65,000 total

Funding Source & Account #: ARP ESSER III Carryover Funds: 25536399 0012 56694

Key Questions: (Please have someone ready to discuss the details of each question during the Finance & Operations meeting or this proposal might not be advanced for consideration by the full Board of Education):

1. Please describe how this service is strategically aligned to the District Continuous Improvement Plan?

This social and emotional learning intervention aligns most closely to the NHPS District's overarching goal of Developing the Whole Child. It also encompasses both the Culture/Climate domain as well as the Youth/Family Engagement priority areas on the Continuous Improvement Plan. Priority areas addressed through this programming include: Social and Emotional Growth, Equity and Excellence, Student Engagement and Supporting At-Risk Youth. This program allows us to increase the accessibility of SEL resources through weekly whole class and individual instruction across grades 1-8. Students receive targeted instruction to help them identify feelings and set goals for effectively managing a variety of different emotions within the school setting.

2. What specific need will this contractor address?

Upon our return from the CoVID shutdown period, some student behavior required interventions beyond the scope of what our one social worker was able to provide due to her current caseload. Our school theme embraces the celebration of arts, and the Miss Kendra program allows drama-based therapists to utilize their arts background to create engaging activities within the classroom. Students need to reconnect with one another, and reestablish prosocial skills. Supportive, meaningful SEL instruction within the classroom creates safe and collaborative spaces for students to discuss feelings and emotions.

3. How was the contractor selected? Quotes? RFP? Sealed Bid or Sole Source? Please describe the selection process including other sources considered and the rationale for selecting this method of selection: RFQ: The Foundation for the Arts and Trauma (using the Miss Kendra Program) has completed the RFQ process through the Office of Youth, Family and Community Engagement.
4. If this is a continuation service, when was the last time the alternatives were sought? Yes, just completed the RFQ as of July 2023.
5. What specific skill set does this contractor bring to the project?
Longstanding expertise in trauma-informed educational practices in Tier 1 models of intervention, based in New Haven, with over ten years of service to the New Haven Public Schools.
6. How does this contractor fit into the project as a whole? (If the contractor is an individual, please attach a copy of their resume):
The Miss Kendra program will provide three part-time counselors to support Edgewood throughout the school year. The Program Director, Dr. David Johnson and Educational Coordinator Erinn Webb also provide ongoing supports.
7. Is this a new or continuation service? Continuation
8. If this is a continuation service has cost increased? No
 - a) If yes, by how much?
 - b) What would an alternative contractor cost? n/a
 - c) Is this a service existing staff could provide? Why or why not? No. Our staff are not certified trauma/drama therapists. The school social worker has a full caseload and cannot provide all of the necessary counseling support that our children need.
9. Evidence of Effectiveness: How will the contractor's performance be monitored and evaluated? Measurement will be by teacher evaluations and project-based evaluations, and school-wide disciplinary data.
10. If a continuation service, attach a copy of the previous evaluations or archival data demonstrating effectiveness. (If archival data includes lengthy reports, syllabi, training materials, etc., please have a copy available for review) See attached.

11. If the service is a professional development program, can the training be provided internally, by district staff? N/A

a) If not, why not?

b) How will the output of this Agreement contribute to building internal capabilities?

12. Why do you believe this Agreement is fiscally sound?

This agreement uses funds to provide additional staffing on a part-time basis. This is a shortage area, and full-time certified social workers are difficult to secure and would require the provision of benefits. This agreement is fiscally sound, and provides immense benefit to our school and student population.

13. What are the implications of not approving this Agreement?

We will not be equipped to adequately support the social and emotional learning needs of our student body without this service, which not only impacts students, but may also affect the amount of talented classroom teachers that we are able to retain for the upcoming school year.



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AGREEMENT
By And Between
The New Haven Board of Education
AND

Foundation for the Arts and Trauma Inc

FOR DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM:

Edgewood Creative Thinking Through STEAM Magnet School

This Agreement entered into on the 10th day of July 2023, effective on the 1st day of June, 2023, by and between the New Haven Board of Education (herein referred to as the “Board” and, Foundation for the Arts and Trauma Inc. located at, 19 Edwards St, New Haven, CT 06511 (herein referred to as the “Contractor”).

Compensation: The Board shall pay the contractor for satisfactory performance of services required in the amount of \$65,000 total for three counselors at \$112.75/hour; \$451/day; \$5412/week for the duration of the year not to exceed \$65,000.

The maximum amount the contractor shall be paid under this agreement: \$65,000. Compensation will be made upon submission of an itemized invoice which includes a detailed description of work performed and date of service.

Fiscal support for this Agreement shall be by ARP ESSER III Carryover Program of the New Haven Board of Education, **Account Number:** 25536399 0012 56694 **Location Code:** 0012.

This agreement shall remain in effect from 9/1/23 to 6/30/24.

SCOPE OF SERVICE: *Please describe service deliverables, including, locations and costs for service, including travel and supplies, if applicable. A detailed Scope of Service with pricing must be attached as Exhibit A).*

- Provide individual and classroom-based trauma-informed counseling and education to students focused on child safety, to include de-escalation, improved coping skills, improved socioemotional learning, improve academic readiness, and positive attitudes toward learning and the school community.

APPROVAL: This Agreement must be approved by the New Haven Board of Education **prior to service start date**. Contactors may begin service no sooner than the day after Board of Education approval.

HOLD HARMLESS: The Contractor shall insure and/or indemnify the Board and its members, employees and agents against all claims, suits, and expenses, including reasonable attorney’s fees, in connection with loss of life, bodily injury or property damage arising from any neglect act or omission of the Contractor or its employees or agents. Further, the Contractor covenants and agrees that it shall hold the Board and its members, employees and agents harmless against any and all claims, suits judgments of any description whatsoever caused by the Contractor’ breach of this agreement or based upon the conduct of the Contractor, or its agents or its employees or arising out of in connection with their activities under this agreement.

TERMINATION: The Board may cancel this agreement for any reason upon thirty (30) days’ written notice sent to the Contractor by certified U.S. mail, return receipt requested; provided however, that the Board shall be responsible to the Contractor for all services rendered by the Contractor through the last day of thirty (30) day notice period, as long as the Agreement was approved by the Board prior to the start date of service.



Contractor Signature

President
New Haven Board of Education

June 14, 2023
Date

Date

David R Johnson PhD, Chief Executive Officer

Contractor Printed Name & Title



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EXHIBIT B

STUDENT DATA PRIVACY AGREEMENT SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For the purposes of this Exhibit B "directory information," "de-identified student information," "school purposes," "student information," "student records," "student-generated content," and "targeted advertising" shall be as defined by Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-234aa.

1. All student records, student information, and student-generated content (collectively, "student data") provided or accessed pursuant to this Agreement or any other services agreement between the Parties are not the property of, or under the control of, the Contractor.
2. The Board shall have access to and the ability to delete student data in the possession of the Contractor except in instances where such data is (A) otherwise prohibited from deletion or required to be retained under state or federal law, or (B) stored as a copy as part of a disaster recovery storage system and that is (i) inaccessible to the public, and (ii) unable to be used in the normal course of business by the Contractor. The Board may request the deletion of any such student information, student records or student-generated content if such copy has been used by the operator to repopulate accessible data following a disaster recovery. The Board may request the deletion of student data by the contractor within two (2) business days of receiving such a request and provide to the Board confirmation via electronic mail that the student data has been deleted in accordance with the request, the date of its deletion, and the manner in which it has been deleted. The confirmation shall contain a written assurance from the Contractor that proper disposal of the data has occurred in order to prevent the unauthorized access or use of student data and that deletion has occurred in accordance with industry standards/practices/protocols.
3. The Contractor shall not use student data for any purposes other than those authorized pursuant to this Agreement.
4. A student, parent or legal guardian of a student may review personally identifiable information contained in student data and correct any erroneous information, if any, in such student data. If the Contractor receives a request to review student data in the Contractor's possession directly from a student, parent, or guardian, the Contractor agrees to refer that individual to the Board and to notify the Board within two (2) business days of receiving such a request. The Contractor agrees to work cooperatively with the Board to permit a student, parent, or guardian to review personally identifiable information in student data that has been shared with the Contractor, and correct any erroneous information therein.

5. The Contractor shall take actions designed to ensure the security and confidentiality of student data.
6. The Contractor will notify the Board, in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-234dd, when there has been an unauthorized release, disclosure or acquisition of student data. Such notification will include the following steps:

Upon discovery by the Contractor of a breach of student data, the Contractor shall conduct an investigation and restore the integrity of its data systems and, without unreasonable delay, but not more than thirty (30) days after such discovery, shall provide the Board with a more detailed notice of the breach, including but not limited to the date and time of the breach; name(s) of the student(s) whose student data was released, disclosed or acquired; nature of and extent of the breach; and measures taken to ensure that such a breach does not occur in the future.

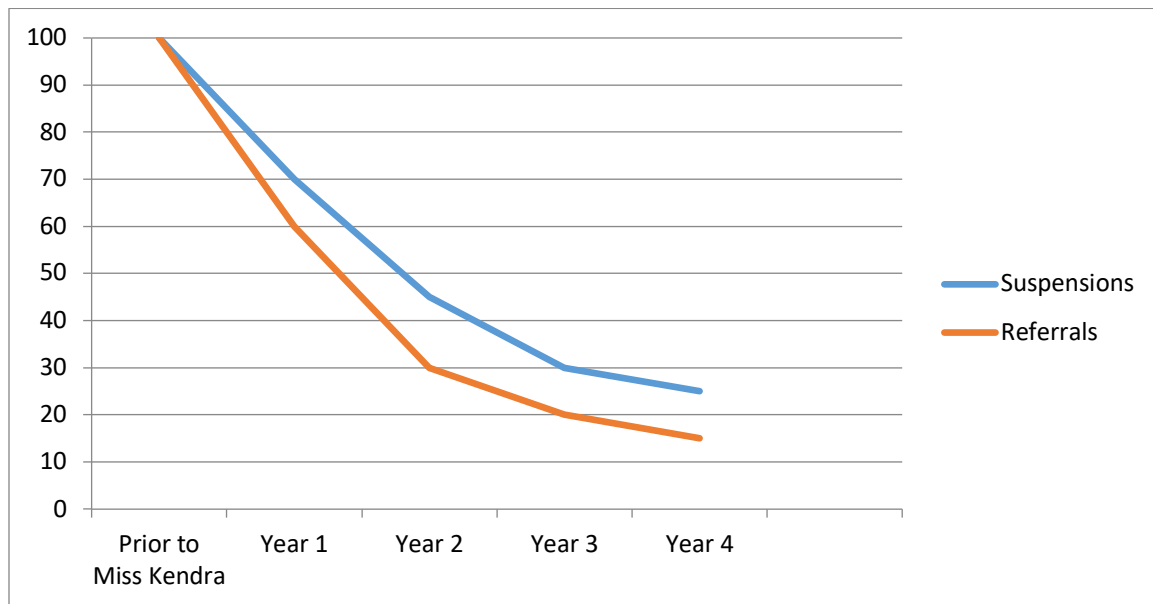
7. Student data shall not be retained or available to the Contractor upon expiration of the contract between the Contractor and Board, except a student, parent or legal guardian of a student may choose independently to establish or maintain an electronic account with the Contractor after the expiration of such contract for the purpose of storing student- generated content.
8. The Contractor and Board shall each ensure their own compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, as amended from time to time.
9. The Contractor acknowledges and agrees to comply with the above and all other applicable aspects of Connecticut's Student Data Privacy law according to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 10-234aa through 10-234dd.
10. The Parties agree that this Agreement controls over any inconsistent terms or conditions contained within any other agreement entered into by the Parties concerning student data.

EXHIBIT C

Outcome Data for the Miss Kendra Program

Percent Reduction in Suspensions and Office Referrals

Aggregate of 12 Schools Implementing Miss Kendra Programs

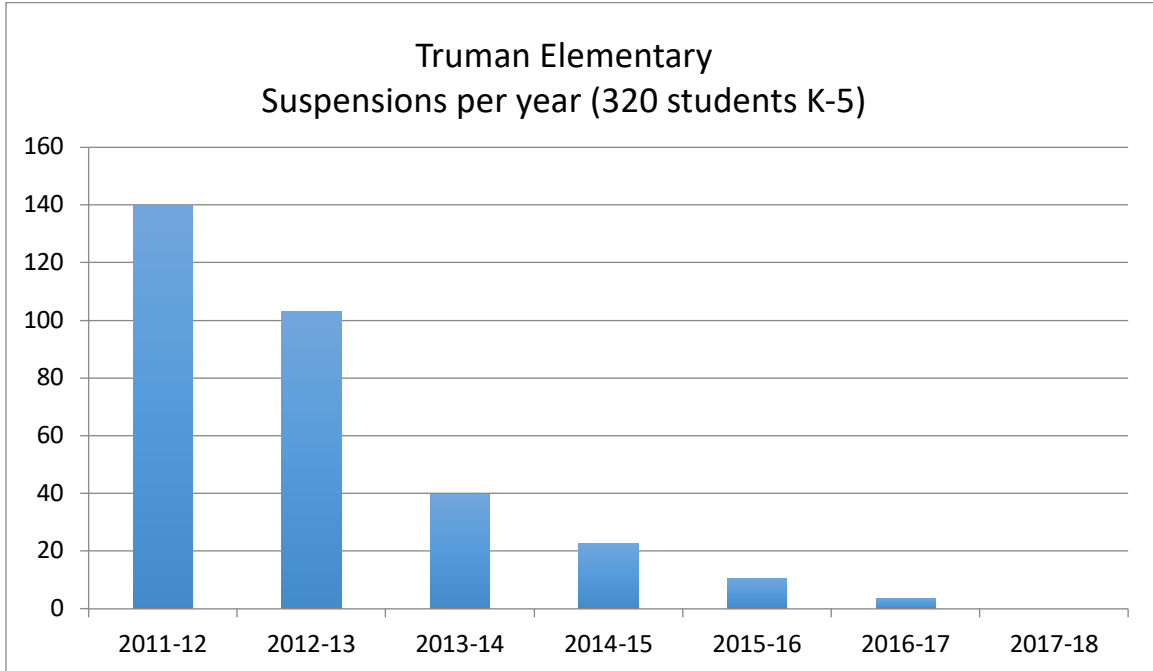


Teacher Support of Miss Kendra Programs

Aggregate of 22 Schools (400 teachers)

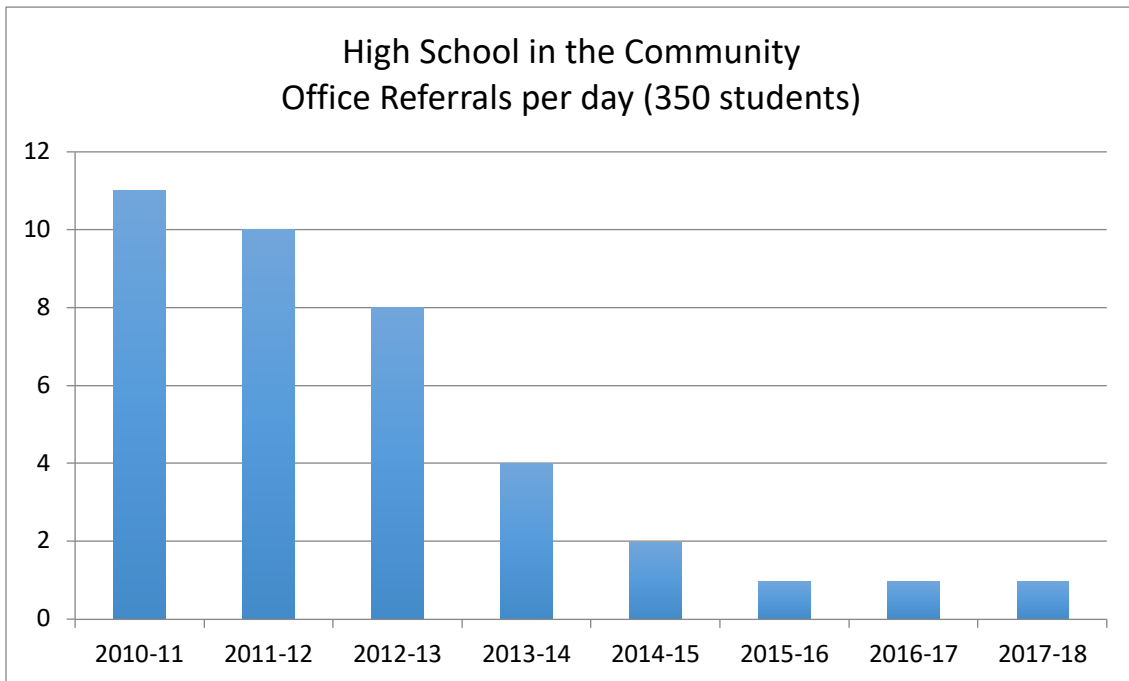
- 95% Recommend Miss Kendra Programs to other teachers
- 90% Miss Kendra Programs calm down my students
- 100% Miss Kendra Programs make my classroom truly trauma-informed
- 90% Helped me build closer relationships with my students

Outcome Data for Miss Kendra Schools

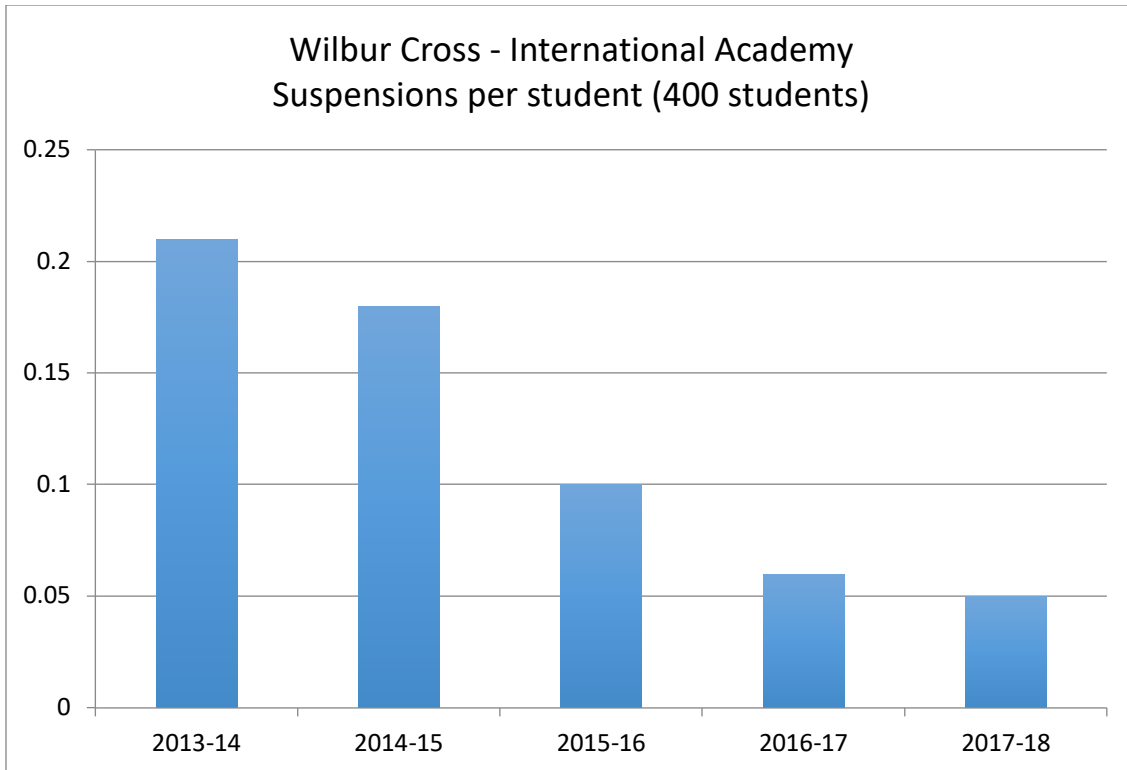


Program
Begins

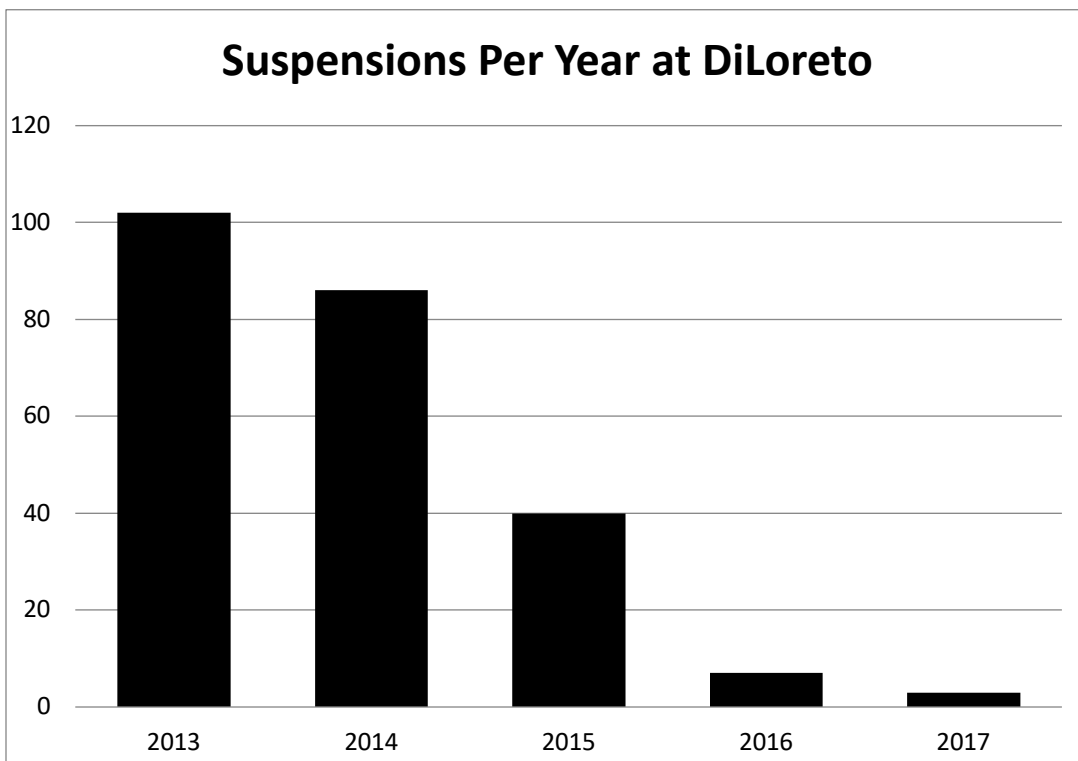
[0 suspensions in 2017-2018]



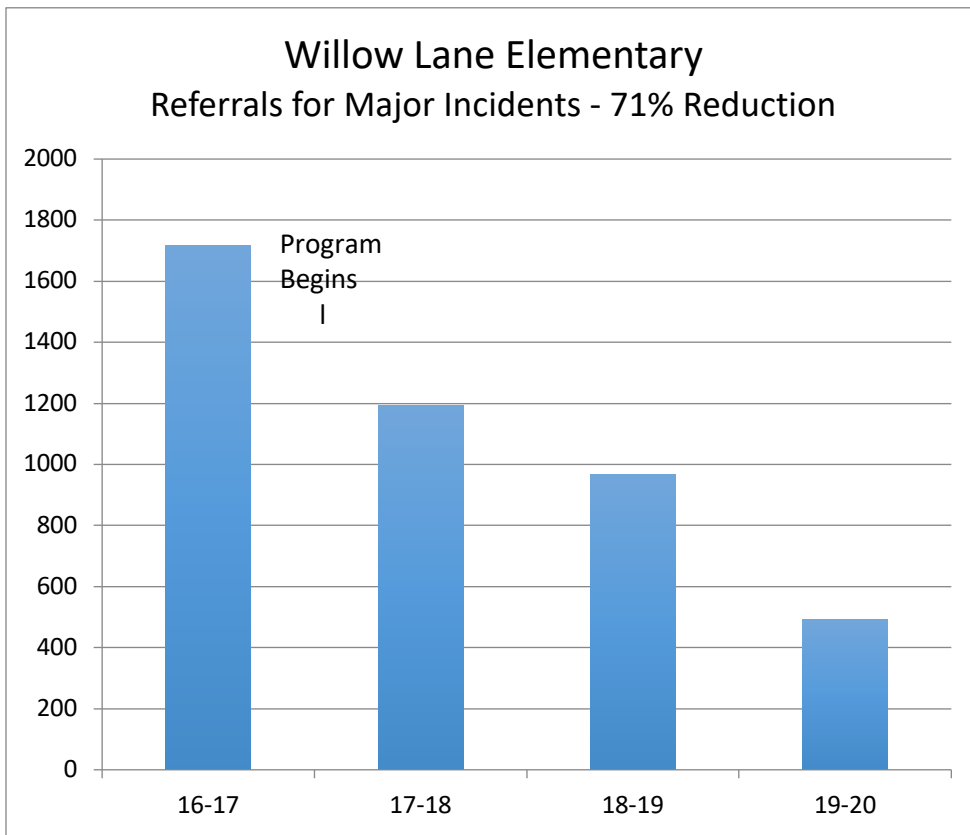
Program
Begins



Program Begins

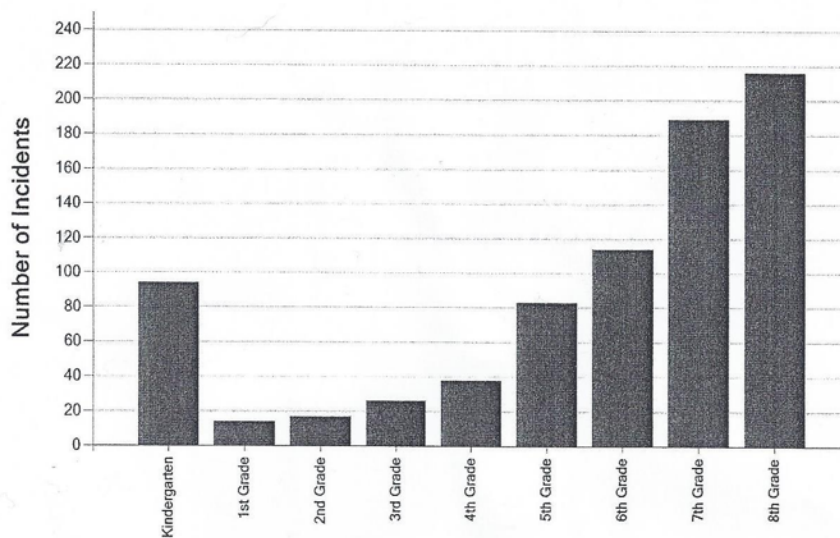


DiLoreto Elementary is in New Britain, and has 550 students, K-5.



Incidents By Grade
Academic Year, 2018–2019

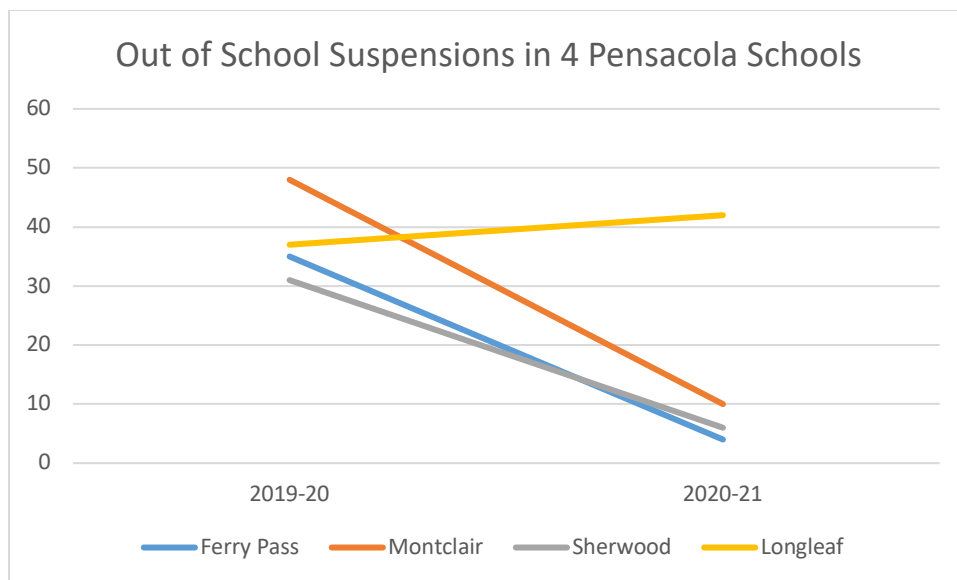
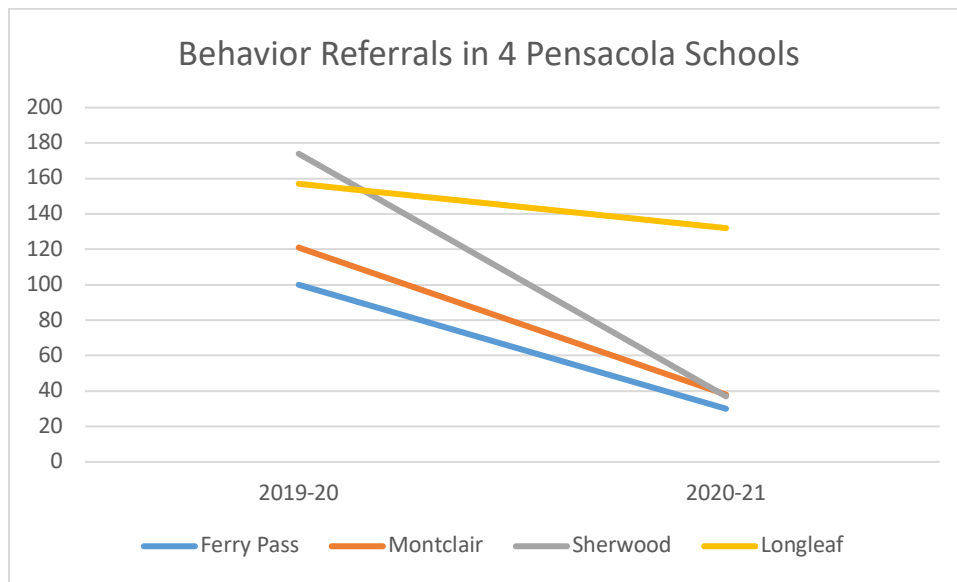
Review360
Behavior Matters
Bishop Woods



Miss Kendra services were conducted only in grades 1 – 4.

Teacher Based Model Data

Four schools in Pensacola, FL were trained in the teacher-based model of Miss Kendra Program for K – 5th grades, but one school was not able to implement the program (Longleaf). All four schools had in-person schooling through the entire semester. Below are data showing the comparison of total behavioral referrals and out of school suspensions from 2019 to 2020, showing dramatic reductions in the three schools that fully implemented Miss Kendra, and little change in the one school that did not.



Report on High School in the Community's Success Story

By Matt Brown, Building Leader

In the 2018-2019 school year, with the help of the Miss Kendra Program, we:

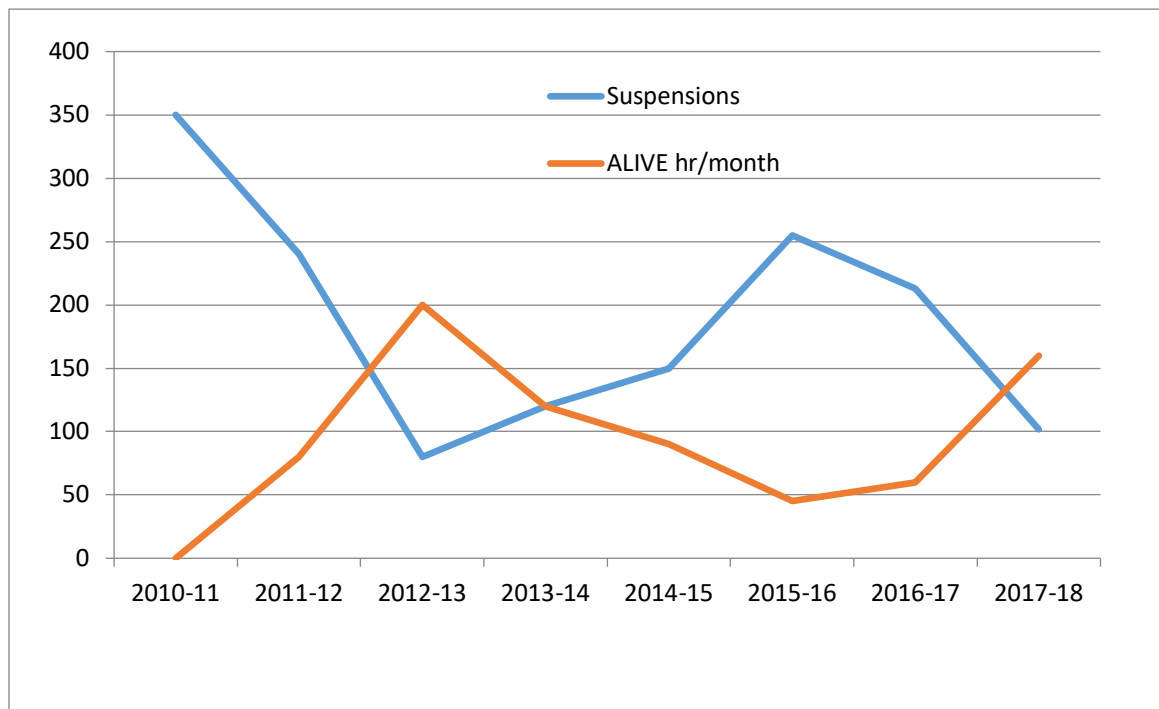
- Reached 77% on our 4 year graduation rate, up from 50% 2 years ago. Looking at our rising 12th graders, we are confident we'll continue to increase and hit the mid-high 80% next year. That's an increase of 50% the past 2 years.
- Increased our average SAT scores by almost 80 points in the same time frame. Saw an increase of 30% of students who reached the college ready benchmark in reading/writing.
- Reduced our chronic absenteeism to 27% - still a work in progress but a far cry from the 42% we started with. We've dropped it 35% over the 3 years.
- Perhaps most importantly, we've leveraged a federal Magnet School Assistance Program grant to broaden our magnet theme, improve our college course offerings and just all around up our recruitment game for students. Results are increases in families marking us as first and second choices in the New Haven high school selection process of 32%/28% respectively, far and away highest gain in the district.

Special Report:

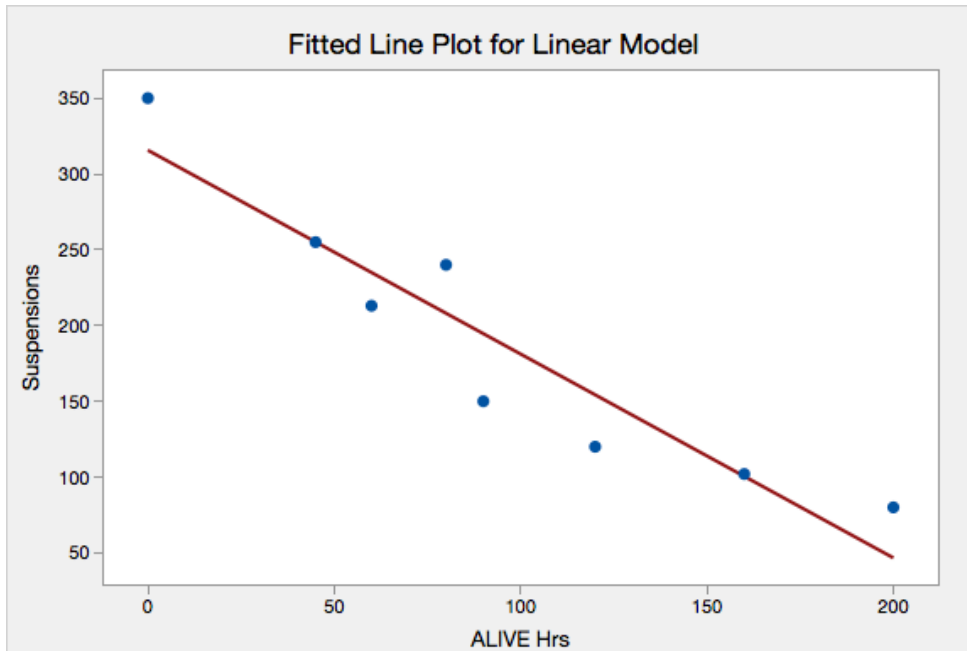
7 Years of Miss Kendra at Barnard (K-8, 550 students)

Miss Kendra has been at Barnard Elementary School for 7 years, through 3 principals, 2 superintendents, with funding and without funding. The program has persevered in partnership with the school staff and has never given up. Due to variations in funding, the amount of hours per month we could provide has varied greatly. As in many other schools, suspensions and disciplinary behaviors have been reduced, but due to the variation we have the ability to track with greater accuracy the effect of the Miss Kendra Program.

The following results show convincingly that the Miss Kendra Program has a direct effect on suspensions. When the amount of program time increases, suspensions decrease, and vice-versa. Miss Kendra began at Barnard in the 2011-2012 year. Suspension data comes from the school. The program was formerly called ALIVE.



Taking these data and conducting a test to look at their correlation through a regression analysis, we get the following graph, which demonstrates how directly the hours of the Miss Kendra Program are associated with a reduction in suspensions:



The statistics are highly significant:

The correlation coefficient (r) is .94, and the regression analysis is $F(1,6) = 45.03$, which is very significant $p < .0005$.

The specific strength of Miss Kendra Program effect can be estimated:

A relatively exact equation can be derived from this data, which is that for each hour per month of program time, suspensions are reduced by 1.34. This means that for each hour per week, suspensions are reduced by 5.36, and for 10 hours of Miss Kendra per week (or .25 FTE), suspensions are reduced by 53.6!

Causality can be deduced:

Normally correlation data cannot be used to determine causality, but in this case since program hours are determined at the beginning of the year, prior to any suspensions, this data is highly indicative of a causal relationship whereby the Miss Kendra Program reduces suspensions.

We are excited and proud of this data.

More importantly, we are excited and proud to have held firm in our commitment to Barnard and our other schools, and to continue to partner with their teachers and administrative staff all these years.

Sincerely,

David R Johnson PhD
and the entire Miss Kendra Team
davidreadjohnson@gmail.com
203-215-0658

Foundation for the Arts and Trauma, Inc.
Miss Kendra Program
End of Year Evaluations by Teachers N= 121

Elementary Schools (Truman, Bishop Woods, Strong, Barnard, Brennan Rogers)

Here are the results of formal end-of-year evaluations of the Miss Kendra program by the teachers:

98% Yes. Did Miss Kendra activities help your students name and process their worries or stressful experiences?

92% Yes. Did Miss Kendra activities help your students focus on their academic work?

94% Yes. Were the Red Bead Clubs for parents effective?

90% Yes. Were the individual Stress Reduction sessions helpful in calming down your upset students?

93% Yes. Did you feel that the Miss Kendra program specialist was your partner in helping your students?

100% Yes. Did the program help you achieve a trauma-informed classroom?

98% Yes. Would you recommend the Miss Kendra program to other teachers or schools?

Here are examples of written comments by teachers about the Miss Kendra program:

“Students were able to express themselves without feeling judged or thinking a staff member would feel differently about them.”

“Students seemed calmer and less disruptive after Miss Kendra sessions.”

“I love knowing that if I have a concern about a student and am not quite sure how to breach the subject, I have Miss Alicia to call. She has always been extremely helpful and the students love her!”

“The students enjoyed Miss Kendra time and being able to go with the Miss Kendra counselor when they had worries or were stressed.”

“It has been a great pleasure to have the Miss Kendra staff. It has been very beneficial to me as a teacher to truly understand the stresses in my students’ lives, and then to be able to work with them and teach them effectively. It also has helped me form trusting relationships with my students, which enhanced the overall classroom environment.”

"My staff specialist did a great job. I liked how he paced the lessons and kept them flowing. He was kind and respectful to staff and students. He showed genuine concern for the students and was very open to discussion with me about different students and information that he may have gotten during his sessions. It helped me to be more sensitive to what some students may be feeling or going through."

"I am so grateful for the Miss Kendra program. And all of the support we received. This program is so important for the health and well-being of our students, and Miss Charlotte was a great source of support for me."

Red Bead Clubs:

"I had more parent engagement in the Red Bead Clubs than at Parent conferences."

"The letters that the parents and students wrote to each other were amazing and touching."

"It allowed an opportunity for the child and parent to bond in areas of need and to share their love and strength with one another."

"Students love having their parents come in. Parents writing their own letters is so exciting for the students."

High Schools (MBA, HSC, New Horizons, Wilbur Cross, Hillhouse)

Here are the results of the end-of-year formal written evaluations by teachers:

100% Yes. Did your students benefit from stress reduction sessions?

98% Yes. Were your students calmer after meeting with Miss Kendra staff?

100% Yes. Did you feel that the Miss Kendra counselors were your partners in working with students?

100% Yes. Would you recommend the Miss Kendra program to other schools?

Here are some written comments by teachers:

"The support you provide is vital to the success of so many students at school."

"The support for students in need of both long term and immediate crisis mode help has been amazing. I see a real change in some of the students I referred that make a meaningful difference in my classroom."

“Every student that I referred has reported a close and trusting relationship with their Miss Kendra counselor.”

“I am so happy they have more Spanish-speaking counselors!”

“The Miss Kendra counselors have been an invaluable resource for our students. I have personally witnessed marked improvement in those working with the program.”

“The Miss Kendra Program staff are very professional, knowledgeable, helpful and efficient.”

“The Miss Kendra team is such a vital part of our school! Many of our students have experienced major trauma which they could not otherwise get help for.”

LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM PRINCIPALS OF MISS KENDRA SCHOOLS

HILLHOUSE HIGH SCHOOL:

Dear Dr. Birks,

The Miss Kendra program has been an integral force in assisting our teachers and mental health supports within our academic setting. Their clinicians assist with treating students with trauma histories, often induced by exposure to community violence, extreme poverty, homelessness, abuse, neglect, and grief associated with peer and family loss. Our academic community is enriched due to the collaborative services and partnership that Miss Kendra Program provides.

One program, which is co-facilitated with the current Miss Kendra clinician and 6 other mental health professionals within our building, is the RENEW “Girls Therapeutic Empowerment Group”. This program works with 20 at risk female students, aiding them in the reduction of maladaptive behaviors and replacing them with more appropriate coping strategies; to assist them with social and emotional functioning within the academic setting. In addition to this, the students are exposed to positive role models weekly, which bolster self-esteem. They also learn the importance of academics, self-advocacy, conflict resolution skills, positive peer relationships, and learn principles of the growth mindset. This group has been able to reduce conflicts, including physical altercations, between group members, and increase utilization of social and emotional supports for group attendees in distress. On a school-wide level, Miss Kendra clinicians, teacher, administrators, and staff, work together to identify students needing more support and collaborate to meet the unique needs of the students in our building. The services the program provides are not only helpful but necessary to the overall environment of our school.

Glen Worthy
Principal

METROPOLITAN BUSINESS ACADEMY:

Dear Dr. Birks,

I wanted to take a moment to speak to the tremendous need for trauma informed services in our schools, and to highlight how such services have benefited the students and staff during my time at Metropolitan Business Academy.

I have known Dr. Johnson for a while, and have been impressed by his drive to use his expertise to help make an impact on the students of New Haven Public Schools. We often call upon our community to give back to this great city and Dr. Johnson has answered that call.

I met Dr. Johnson years ago when he was first implementing the Miss Kendra program. He was the first to introduce me to the effects that trauma can have on, not only the students we see having difficulty, but those that are sitting in the back of the classroom doing exactly what they should be doing day in and day out. We collaborated together early on and I always felt as if Dr. Johnson valued my expertise as an educator and accepted feedback and made adjustments to the program accordingly.

When I began as principal of MBA this year, the impact that the Miss Kendra program has had on the students and staff here was immediately apparent. I walked into a community that addresses our students' struggles head on- struggles that include, but are not limited to, poverty, neglect, grief and loss, witnessing and experiencing abuse, domestic violence, community violence, and gang involvement.

The Miss Kendra Program has helped create a school climate that allows for open conversations about these issues, the result of which is that students feel less burdened and are therefore more able to attend to their schoolwork. Open conversations about our students' trauma fosters understanding and compassion among teachers towards their students. They are more able to use restorative justice practices, versus disciplinary techniques that so often do not work with traumatized students. Miss Kendra clinicians, administration, teachers, and other school staff work together to identify student's individual needs and provide them with the necessary supports, the results of which are increased attendance, improved academic performance, and a reduction in suspensions. The support the program provides has been invaluable to the overall health and functioning of our school.

Michael Crocco
Principal

WILBUR CROSS HIGH SCHOOL:

Greetings Gemma,

I hope this email finds you well. As I am preparing for the second half of the year, I have spent a lot of time reflecting on our school programs and practices. The primary task of students at Wilbur Cross is getting an education to prepare them for life beyond high school. Every day, I witness firsthand how stressors outside of school create obstacles toward that future. Students often come to Cross grappling with family conflict, poverty,

loss, depression, anxiety, and other traumatic experiences. As the largest school in New Haven, we need trauma-informed support for these students now more than ever.

Over the past several years working with the Miss Kendra Program, I have seen students get the supports they need to deal with the real stressors in their lives before they spill over into school and result in explosive behaviors, like fighting, cursing out teachers and/or withdrawn behaviors, like disengagement and truancy. Program staff provide on-the-ground support to students in crisis. When students are able to get the supports they need for their distress, they are better able to attend to their education. They also support teachers who are impacted with vicarious trauma when working with our population.

Miss Kendra program staff have collaborated seamlessly with our administrative, teaching, and social support staff to serve not only our students but also to alleviate stress for our staff. I am immensely grateful for their partnership.

Edith Johnson, Principal

HIGH SCHOOL IN THE COMMUNITY:

Good afternoon Gemma,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to take a moment as we are in the midst of budget planning season to write you and share how much of a positive impact the Miss Kendra Program has had at HSC over the past 4 years. As you know, HSC was one of the original cohort of Commissioner's Network schools due to historically low graduation rates, high suspension and student absenteeism and low 9th grade success (earning enough credits to move to 10th grade). Additionally, HSC was struggling to find ways to manage the large number of our students who were reporting adverse childhood experiences (at one point over 2/3 of the student body).

The clinicians in the Miss Kendra Program began working with the current HSC leadership team in 2015, targeting ways to support students social emotional growth while also reminding them that they were primarily in the "business of school", aiming to teach students coping strategies to allow them to stay in class as much as possible. They co teach Freshman Seminars, lead support groups and work with dozens and dozens of individual students regularly for check ins and support.

As a result, 4 years later HSC has seen a 67% increase in its graduation rate, significantly reduced suspensions, 40% reduction in chronic absenteeism, and 60% increase in 9th grader successfully moving to 10th grade. The program's ability to deeply partner with our school leadership team, to connect and support our most struggling students, and to see their work in service of the academic outcomes are key factors in HSC's recent success. Indeed, it is impossible for me to see how we would have made such strides without them.

While we are pleased that we have been able to see so much progress with HSC, we also know that there is still a great deal of work to be done. This generation of adolescents is often cited by researchers as having the highest rate of anxiety of any group yet studied; our middle schools record increasing amounts of childhood trauma in their students and our society is struggling to provide a sense of stability and security for many of our most vulnerable families. Miss Kendra's Program will be even more critical as we face these challenges in the future. Please count me, and HSC, amongst the groups that benefit tremendously from our partnerships with the Miss Kendra Program and see them as an essential and unique service.

Thanks - and please let me know if you have any questions or if I can be of any more assistance in discussing Miss Kendra's program work at HSC.

Matt Brown
Building Leader

STRONG SCHOOL

Dear Dr. Birks,

The Miss Kendra program has been a part of Strong Magnet school for the past 6 years. I feel very fortunate to have acquired a partnership with Dr. David Johnson and his staff. When Dr. Johnson and I first met to discuss the program that was going to be implemented at my school, I was excited and optimistic as finally there was someone that shared the same vision as me. We spoke in depth about the importance of reaching young children who may have experienced some trauma in their life that was preventing them from learning, socializing, and ultimately being a productive member of society.

During my first year as Principal of Strong School, there were high numbers of students displaying anger, frustration, and aggressive behavior. Parents were called to come to the school quite often and students were missing instructional time due to their inability to focus and learn. Since then I have noticed a significant drop in behavior referrals, suspensions, and overall disciplinary problems. Not only do the students feel supported, the teachers do as well. The staff and students at Strong have made trusting relationships with the Miss Kendra staff, and have become important members of our Strong family.

Throughout the six years that we have been working with the Miss Kendra program we have experienced significant changes. Both students and teachers have seen positive changes within their classroom setting. Teachers have expressed the tight connections that students have made with the drama therapist working so closely in their room. The students feel a sense of relief when they get the opportunity to "play" with the therapist, and the teacher notices a sense of calmness that students portray after returning to the classroom. This allows the student to get back to learning. "Miss Kendra" has also become a key member of our school. The students write letters to this fictional character, which allows students another way to express their feelings. Students then look forward

to hearing the advice and warm words from Ms. Kendra. Parents have become actively involved by attending “The Red Bead Club” to show their support to their child. I fully support this program with hopes that more students and schools will be fortunate enough to participate in the Miss Kendra program.

Sincerely,
Susan DeNicola- Principal