

January 16, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

During the 2012-2103 school year, Zachary Taylor Elementary formed a partnership with the Sanders, Trowel, and Ward Center for Excellence. The school's administration and Family Resource Center began our partnership to begin to address student preparation to be successful in school, reading, etiquette, and respect. STW provided lessons on etiquette, classroom preparation and the importance of reading for success. Out of this partnership STW identified a greater concern and need amongst our students at Zachary Taylor Elementary. The concern and need was to address the barriers to our lack of academic and social progress among our African American Male population.

STW created a summer program in collaboration with the school's administrative camp that focused on 4 major areas: Reading, Respect, Mentoring and Parental Involvement. STW implemented a 2 week summer camp that begin with a parent meeting to solidify parent support and participation. After solidifying parent support and commitment, STW began their two week summer camp with about 10 students from Zachary Taylor and a few other schools in the surrounding area. The camp focused on reading skills and mentoring. STW utilized area high school students to serve as mentors and tutors to assist with individualized student support during the 2 weeks. The students identified goals and next steps that they were going to work on during the 2013-2014 school year.

Students that completed the 2 week camp received certificates and were recognized during a school-wide community meeting. These same students were deemed ZT Ambassadors and hosted visitors during special events. Teachers, parents and school staff immediately noticed the change in the student participants' school behavior and willingness to participate in class with responsible behavior.

The program was deemed successful by school staff and STW staff and we proceeded planning for a second summer with greater numbers and support. The program was implemented with equal success, but STW and ZT were unable to increase numbers due to lack of funding.

STW has identified an area of great concern to our community and schools. The reading focus with mentoring and tutoring support is necessary to ensure the success of our struggling African American males. I am in hopes that we can continue our partnership with Sanders, Trowel, and Ward Center for Excellence. This group has the skill, tenacity, and compassion to make great changes in our work with African American males with academic and social progress.

Sincerely,



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Zachary Taylor Elementary

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