

From: noreply@formstack.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2024 10:10 AM
To: Web Master; County Board Public Comment
Subject: PublicComment



Formstack Submission For: **PublicComment**

Submitted at 10/22/24 10:09 AM

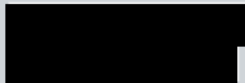
Meeting Date: 10/22/24

Meeting: DuPage County Board

Name: Daniel DeBruycker

Organization: Metea Valley High School

Address:



**Daytime
Phone:**



Subject: Please support Metea Valley CARES Mental Health Program

Comment:

Dear Chair Conroy and DuPage County Board Members,

As Principal of Metea Valley High School in Aurora, I am proud that during the 2023-2024 academic year our school was able to support students and families at a new level utilizing an after school mental health program called CARES (Community Advocacy, Resilience, Engagement and Supports) to high school students. The CARES program was created by our Superintendent, Dr. Adrian Talley to provide early access to mental health interventions in grades

K-8 through a partnership with Warrenville-based ReferralGPS and Endeavor Health's Community Investment Fund. The Metea Valley staff, families and community shared with our leaders the positive impact it had on our school's climate, culture and equitable practices.

The goals of the CARES program are: (1) to de-stigmatize mental health in schools; (2) promote health equity; and (3) provide rapid access to no-cost after school mental healthcare. CARES does this by creating new multi-lingual access points to mental health care in schools via a discreet appointment referral system, cultivating partnerships with local mental health providers, and building the capacity amongst and within schools for behavioral health equity. Most importantly, CARES gets students and families connected into care fast by bypassing traditional waitlists and uses grant dollars to provide after school treatment sessions to families in need at no charge! All students participating in the program receive up to eight (8) no-cost after school mental health treatment sessions delivered by an Illinois licensed provider.

Indian Prairie is thankful for Governor Pritzker's support of mental health through the IDPH grant our school received last year, but unfortunately, this pandemic-funded grant ended 6/30/24 with all grant dollars expended. The school district is seeking funding to continue the CARES program at Metea Valley High School where there are 2,805 students and 763 are lowincome (27% of the student population). High school staff have stated there is still an unmet need for post-pandemic mental health support. Additionally, the services could be expanded to Metea feeder elementary and middle schools located in DuPage County as families with younger siblings have also requested access to care.

Rest assured, Indian Prairie will commit all grant funds in accordance with the deadline if you are able to award funds as our Superintendent is a former Deputy Director of a federal agency with decades of grant experience. \$250,000 of funding would provide up to 900 after school mental health treatment sessions to students at no-cost to families.

Thank you for considering our request to meet the mental health needs of Metea students!

From: noreply@formstack.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2024 9:56 AM
To: Web Master; County Board Public Comment
Subject: PublicComment



Formstack Submission For: **PublicComment**

Submitted at 10/22/24 9:55 AM

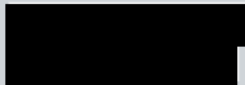
Meeting Date: 10/22/24

Meeting: DuPage County Board

Name: Tara Bell

Organization: Metea Valley High School

Address:



Daytime Phone:



Subject: Please Consider Funding Metea Valley High School's Mental Health Project CARES for low-income students

Comment:

Good Morning Chair Conway and DuPage County Board Members, My name is Tara Bell and I am a Metea Valley High School Teacher who was involved in the creation of the after school mental health program in Indian Prairie School District called Indian Prairie CARES. On behalf of our Board of Education and Superintendent, Dr. Adrian Talley, the Chief Architect of the CARES model, I am here to ask for your support to fund the continuation of the CARES program at Metea Valley High School this school year. Dr. Talley and

myself previously spoke during public comment at a board meeting about this program.

Indian Prairie CARES has proven itself to be a successful model for delivering after school no-cost mental health care to low-income students most impacted by the pandemic. Indian Prairie in partnership with Endeavor Health Community Investment Fund created CARES to address early interventions for mental health in grades K-8 post-pandemic. Last year, we received an IDPH grant to expand services to high school students, and we were so blessed to receive \$250,000 of pandemic funds from Gov. Pritzker which expired June 30. With those funds, Indian Prairie CARES delivered 903 50-minute no-cost one-one-one after school mental health treatment sessions to low-income high school students. The CARES model is unique because it gets kids FREE help fast and students are connected through our referral service, ReferralGPS with a local therapist the same week. Post-appointment surveys indicated that families rated the quality of treatment provided as 4.8/5 and 100% recommend continuing the CARES program in the future.

If you happen to know a teenager, I am sure you will agree that COVID changed everything! There is an unprecedented need for mental health support post-pandemic due to trauma, isolation and anxiety and those needs didn't end June 30 with our IDPH grant. We ask you to please include our proposal in the ARPA funds discussion and fund the continuation of the CARES program at Metea Valley to provide an additional 38 weeks of services totaling 874 after school FREE therapy sessions. School starts next week and we have no other funding source to continue the program. In your packet you will see a detailed description of our program, budget and letter of support from our principal. You have the power to decide whether 2,805 Metea Valley High School students, of which 763 are low-income, have access to after school mental health care in the coming weeks. Rest assured, Indian Prairie will commit all ARPA funds in accordance with the 12/31/24 deadline.

Regardless of the outcome, we wish to thank Metea's county board rep, Patty Gustin for her support of our program and we wish for all constituents to know that she is a strong advocate for education, mental health and wellness within the county. Thank you!

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