

Supporting Behaviors so Teachers can Teach

I understand that teachers are experts in educating students. A teacher who is able to creatively introduce their students to the world of scholarship is going to be successful because they are doing what they love, but suddenly our teachers found themselves ensuring that students had eaten, supporting students in crisis, and managing absenteeism and behavioral disruptions at an unprecedented level. Our teachers were calling for support, and our board understood that we needed to act in new and innovative ways. In an effort to combat the onslaught of behavioral concerns and mental health crisis, and to give students what they need in order to be successful in school our board approved an increase in counselors, creating positions in every elementary school and increasing the number of counselors in every secondary school. These counselors not only support teaching of essential soft skills such as stress management and interpersonal relationships, but engaging students in success academically, informing parents and teachers of opportunities that exist in the district and ways to meet their goals for adult life after graduation.

The relationship of a parent to a counselor is imperative. I have repeatedly and continually advocated for clear relationships between parents and counselors. No human is more attuned to the needs of a child than his or her parent. I do not support counseling without the clear consent and communication between the counselor and the parent.