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The Power of Relationships

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There is power in relationships. Your local public schools recognize that the most influential part of life isn't about what an individual studied or where they've been, but rather to what extent relationships, past and present, influence their life. For this important reason, your local public school teachers understand that kids thrive when they are learning with each other, and when they have relationships with adults based upon trust and deep care.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs shows us that humans require physical and safety needs to be met first, and psychological needs must be met second, before higher-order needs can be addressed.

Research validates that if a student doesn't find a productive way to build relationships with other students and adults in school, their learning is put at risk, and further, they are in danger of participating in other risky behaviors. Alternatively, when students feel safe and connected to individuals and activities in the life of the school, they are more likely to learn at high levels and experience personal success.

Each local public school is purposeful in creating the conditions where students have positive relationships so that they can learn at high levels. Examples of these programs and opportunities include:

- Offering an array of sports, activities and clubs where students, along with developing their talents, can further develop friendships with classmates.
- Staff integrating a skills-based social emotional skill development into learning experiences that include responsible decision making, social awareness, self-awareness and self-management.
- Providing skilled and experienced social workers and psychologists to assist students during a personal or family crisis.
- Large, medium and small group opportunities designed to intervene when students struggle in the classroom.
- Academic and social emotional interventions designed around individual student needs and monitored by related services staff.
- Through Link Crew, a high school support program, new students are welcomed and made to feel comfortable throughout their first year of high school. Link Crew

leaders, who are juniors and seniors, are mentors and student leaders who help facilitate their mentees' success.

- High school students visit with and mentor children in middle school. These connections are important to helping younger students transition to high school and start high school on the right foot.
- Peer tutoring programs in which students are working with other students on subjects such as math and writing not only help students improve academically, they also help develop relationships.

Know that your local public schools are diligent in ensuring every student is making connections, is known and cared for and experiences a web of support during a time of personal challenge and crisis. Every day, educators exhibit compassion toward students; make themselves available to students before and after school; and foster a family atmosphere at school. Ensuring our students' well-being and fostering a safe learning environment are key aspects of a well-rounded education and preparation for students' life after graduation.