

Columbus Municipal School District

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Dr. Charles Friedman
Motivational Interviewing
10755 71st Avenue, Suite West
Seminole, FL 33772

Dr. Friedman:

I want to take this opportunity to express my greatest appreciation to you for sharing the tools and techniques of the *Motivational Interviewing* program with my district's leadership and school safety team on November 21, 2008. Since that time, the program has transformed the way Columbus Municipal School District responds to our assessment of school-level violence and the propensity toward destructive behavior exhibited by students. I must admit after using your tools and strategies across our elementary schools, middle schools, and high school, we discovered that our teachers and students have become more proactive in keeping our schools safe. Unfortunately, we discovered that our schools' campuses were not as safe as they appeared on the surface.

Our district leadership team has organized a school safety assessment team at each campus and we are applying the *Motivational Interviewing* program based on the specific needs of the each school. For example, we have found that our elementary campuses are having real concerns with bullying and the rising tide of students with attention deficient and hyperactivity disorders. Our high school is concerned with gang identification and the rise in disagreements leading to fighting. Because your curriculum focuses on real-life scenarios, decision-making, and consequences for actions, we are able to tailor a plan using the interactive DVD series to "show" students and teachers how to address these issues in a non-confrontational manner.

We realize that school safety is an on-going process, however, we feel much better prepared to offer appropriate professional development for our staff and school resource officers. We are also better prepared to offer our students better communication and decision-making strategies. Our schools' leadership teams are also training parents to help them understand that disruptive behavior can lead to much more serious behaviors if problems are not discussed and addressed. Further, we are using these training opportunities to enlist stronger parental support. On behalf of Columbus Schools, we thank you for training us to use *Motivational Interviewing* effectively. This program is just what we needed to align our goodwill regarding student safety with a means of making it a reality in our schools.

Sincerely,



Dr. Martha Liddell
Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education

Cc: Dr. Del R. Phillips, Superintendent of Education
