



March 2, 2018

Kris Kløver
Omaha Downtown Rotary Club Foundation
PO Box 964
Elkhorn, NE 68022

Dear Kris,

On behalf of the Omaha Home for Boys, thank you again for your support of the Omaha Home for Boys' Residential Care Program Educational Services. It is my wish that this letter serve as the final report on the \$1,000 in grant funding awarded to the Omaha Home for Boys School (OHBS) for their work with young men at-risk of academic failure.

In 2017, OHB's Residential Care Program served 96 young men, ages 15-18. The average age of participants was 16.9. 4% identified themselves as Native American; 36% as Black; 14% as Hispanic; 17% as Multi-racial; and 29% as White. The average length of stay in the program was five months. The Residential Care Program serves youth and families from across the state of Nebraska. 40% of youth came from Lincoln/Lancaster County; 30% from Omaha/Douglas and Sarpy Counties; and the remaining 30% came from other Nebraska communities.

While youth are in treatment at the Omaha Home for Boys, their educational needs are addressed at the Omaha Home for Boys School. Providing educational services at OHBS allows OHB to control the classroom environment and keep youth within the program's model of care throughout the entire day. The school provides students with supports which were not available to them in the public schools. Among these supports are:

- More intensive social skills instruction which helps students improve their overall success in the educational setting.
- Smaller class size and low student-to-staff ratios provide opportunities for one-on-one instruction and increased accountability.
- Focus on credit recovery and accrual allows students to focus on moving closer to grade-level expectations and, ultimately, graduation.
- Education plans are part of each youth's treatment plan and communication among all parts of the treatment team – house parents, program consultants, educators, probation, and family members- ensure that the youth's behavioral and academic needs are being met.
- Use of Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement-II (KTEA) allows educational staff to determine the best curriculum for each youth and the type of additional academic supports that may be needed.

The shift to providing educational services at OHBS has all but eliminated truancy. Since truancy is one of the primary reasons youth are placed at OHB, this is very remarkable. For students unaccustomed to regular attendance, just showing up day after day and doing the work yields benefits – improved reading and math comprehension, credit accrual, improvements in GPA and graduation.

During the fall semester of 2017, students at OHBS earned 193 credits needed for graduation. As of February 28, 2018, students have earned 77 credits during the spring semester. The success which OHBS students achieve in credit recovery and accrual demonstrates the power of having a singular focus.



Previously disengaged students with very limited prospects for graduation have discovered that they have the power to improve their prospects by applying themselves to learn course materials through the use of Acellus or Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) curriculums. At OHBS, youth focus on two courses at a time and work at their own pace to learn the materials offered by each course. With the one-on-one support of OHBS educators, youth were able to pass 81% of credits attempted. (19% of credits attempted were incomplete due to youth being discharged from the program prior to credit completion.) Prior to coming to OHB's Residential Care Program, the average student had only passed 56% of the credits he had attempted.

The Omaha Home for Boys is especially proud of the four young men who were able to earn sufficient graduation credits while at OHBS to graduate from high school at the end of the fall 2017 semester. OHBS staff are working with each of the young men to apply for scholarships to help fund their educational and vocational training plans. These four successful students are wonderful examples for the other students working hard to achieve their goals of graduating with their peers.

For youth in the residential program long enough to have taken the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA) post-test, improvements in numeracy and literacy scores are very positive. Students have improved an average of one grade level in both math and reading. Youth are moving closer to grade-level expectations because of the intensive help they receive while in OHBS.

The average GPA of youth admitted to the Residential Care Program was 1.25 at admission. The average GPA for credits earned while at OHBS is 2.13 – a 70.4% improvement. While this improvement does not impact a student's cumulative GPA as much as one might hope, it does offer students hope that they can improve their GPA and can make progress toward their goal of graduating from high school.

Thank you for partnering with the Omaha Home for Boys in our commitment to improving the lives of youth by improving their academic performance and increasing the likelihood that they will graduate from high school.

Sincerely,



Lori Bechtold
Development Leader

Kris -
Many thanks to
you and the
Foundation for
the generous
support!