



staunton farm
foundation

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Staunton Farm Foundation grant to support culture of wellness at Propel Schools

PITTSBURGH, PA (Tuesday, February 18, 2020)—Thanks to a \$100,000 grant from the Staunton Farm Foundation, Propel Schools scholars will have increased access to in-school mental wellness support that allows scholars to overcome roadblocks to success and reach their full potential academically and socially.

The grantee, Propel Schools Foundation, will use the funds to support Propel Partners In Wellness, a program that increases scholars' abilities to meet current and future challenges with confidence; provides educators and staff with professional development that enhances classroom environments; and engages families with strategies, services and tools that reduce barriers to scholar learning. According to research, 20% of children nationally have mental wellness issues that, if not addressed, can impact every part of their life, including academic success and socialization skills.

"This support from the Staunton Farm Foundation is crucial as we seek to mitigate the negative effects of trauma that many of our scholars face," said Propel Schools CEO/Superintendent Dr. Tina Chekan. "Our Partners In Wellness programming allows our schools to foster positive climates and be true communities of learning and growth supporting the whole child."

"We know kids can't learn if they are hungry; so many schools now offer students both breakfast and lunch. It's time we recognize they can't learn if they have stress in their lives outside school as well. Propel has made a long-term commitment to the mental wellbeing of their students. Helping kids with challenges frees up time for Propel staff to spend more time with the rest of the students. It's a win-win for everyone," says Joni Schwager, Executive Director of the Staunton Farm Foundation.

A 2015 award of \$150,000 from Staunton Farm Foundation allowed Propel to adopt the Partners in Wellness program. This new grant allows the program to be replicated so that all Propel scholars can benefit from this transformative set of school-based supports and programs.

For further information, contact Staunton Farm Foundation Executive Director Joni Schwager at jschwager@stauntonfarm.org, 412-281-8020 or Sonya M. Toler, Propel Schools Sr. Director of Strategic Communications & Enrollment at sonyatoler@propelschools.org, 412-337-4573.

About the Staunton Farm Foundation

The Staunton Farm Foundation is dedicated to improving the lives of people who live with mental illness and substance use disorders. The Foundation works to enhance behavioral health treatment, support, and recovery through grant making to nonprofit organizations in 10 southwestern Pennsylvania counties (Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland).

About Propel Schools

Propel Schools is a network of public charter schools that transforms the lives of children in underserved communities through innovative, student-centered learning. Propel sets a standard for creating productive citizens by prioritizing academic excellence and fundamental life skills. Based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Propel has become one of the largest, fastest-expanding charter school organizations since it was established in 2003. Today, Propel serves 4,000 students at 13 Allegheny County locations. Visit propelschools.org to learn more.

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