

Strong in Every Way: Webs of Support for Youth

WHEREAS, *Strong in Every Way* (SIEW) is a campaign of Zionsville Community Schools (ZCS) to build the human capital of youth through partnership with parents and the wider community, undergirded by multiple pillars of understanding: developing strong **WEBS OF SUPPORT, ASSETS AND RESOURCES, and CULTURAL UNDERSTANDINGS;** and

WHEREAS, “WEBS OF SUPPORT” refers to interlinking, metaphorical “strings,” representing tangible and intangible **ASSETS and RESOURCES** that support our youth, which strings are held by adults who “anchor” youth, with “anchors” defining individuals youth identify as caring adults who convey high expectations, and are able to provide opportunities and support for the youth to live into those expectations; and which strings connote anchors’ various protective, stabilizing, and supportive contributions to either “thick” (many anchors and strings) or “thin” (few anchors and strings) webs of support; and

WHEREAS, thickly-webbed youth are more likely to succeed, avoid risks, overcome set-backs, and lead healthy, productive, positive lives than thinly-webbed youth; and research shows that the thicker students’ webs of support, the less likely they are to use drugs and alcohol, to be depressed or have suicidal thoughts, to fail in school, and to exhibit anti-social or violent behaviors; and

WHEREAS, *SIEW* represents the imperative to build upon an already strong community culture by recognizing that **WEBS OF SUPPORT** are key to supporting youth, and the importance of an abundance of adults to become anchors, because a preponderance of evidence shows that positive relationships are the foundation to **WEBS OF SUPPORT;** and

WHEREAS, most school and community-based youth health programs and policies have focused on single-problem prevention, risk reduction and treatment over the last 40 years, yielding mixed results in preventing risk behaviors and preparing youth for life's challenges; and

WHEREAS, research demonstrates that focused and long-term social-emotional learning practices that sustain and increase the **WEB OF SUPPORT** for each student have yielded significant gains in school performance, educational attainment, income acquisition, optimism, self-esteem, and relationships with family and peers; and that effective families, schools, faith communities, Towns (like Zionsville, Whitestown, and rural areas served by ZCS) contribute to growing and sustaining the **WEBS OF SUPPORT** of all youth; and

WHEREAS all sectors of the community (parents, youth, congregations, schools, businesses, Chambers of Commerce, town councils, media, youth programs, social service agencies, health organizations, fraternal organizations, and others) can have meaningful and measurable roles in enhancing youth development and wellness; and

WHEREAS, a full spectrum approach that integrates youth development opportunities and social-emotional learning can empower local youth serving organizations, programs, and services to focus their efforts on building students’ **WEBS OF SUPPORT;** and

WHEREAS, ZCS strives to partner with parents and the community to sustain and elevate student achievement while reducing or eliminating risk behaviors that jeopardize our youth, using both risk reduction and student development/resiliency enhancement strategies to ensure the community’s young people are fully prepared for adulthood;

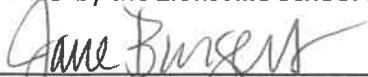
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we endorse integrated social-emotional learning efforts to increase and sustain the **WEB OF SUPPORT** that every student needs because of the proven capacity building and prevention properties of such approaches; and



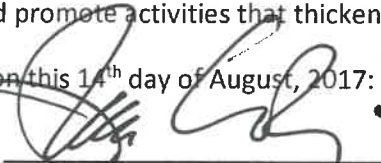
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ZCS Board of Trustees ("Board") recommends that all youth oriented programs in our school and community include information on **WEBS OF SUPPORT** in presentations, workshops and training opportunities to better thicken students' webs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board strongly encourages other local governments, congregations, fraternal organizations, businesses, and families to embrace and promote activities that thicken **WEBS OF SUPPORT**.

ADOPTED by the Zionsville School Board of Trustees on this 14th day of August, 2017:




Jane Burgess, President



Shari Alexander Richey, Member

Joe Stein, Vice President



Debbie Ungar, Secretary



Jim Longest, Member