



Attention:

Aunamesha Henley, DrPH

To Whom it May Concern,

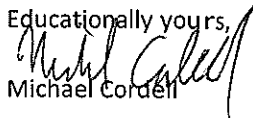
After reviewing the new health standards created under direction of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, I am eager to recommend that they are accepted for use in the upcoming school year. I have worked in urban education since 1997 and in the District of Columbia since 2000. We have worked urgently and thoughtfully to improve education outcomes for the students in DC and continue to see improvements in student performance.

Despite improvements, we know that we have a lot of work to do to ensure that all students are reaching the level of academic expectations contained in the Common Core standards and by our student high school graduation criteria. As we have focused on closing achievement gaps connected to student performance on high stake's tests and in college matriculation, we know that it is equally as important that we provide an education to the whole child.

The new state health standards are an important move in the direction to ensure that we educate the whole child. Within the last three years, all educators continue to receive training on recent breakthroughs in understanding how the brain works from neuroscience studies. We recognize that there is a dramatic impact on how the brain is ready to learn and perform optimally, if we do not ensure that the student's physical and mental health needs are met.

The health standards are smart in laying out developmentally appropriate standards across the most important domains of health education. The standards will be the starting point to help all educators align resources and share ideas as to how we will ensure students achieve the standards. The students need to grow in the identified skills to ensure that they can both achieve more in the classrooms every day and also have the tools needed to manage all the outside challenges that prevent them from completing high school and college.

Our students are incredibly resilient and as someone who focuses full time on our special education students, it is exciting to see that the city is continuing to move forward with educating the whole child. Again, the standards are only the beginning, but it will help unit us with a common road map and we know that we have the talent amongst all our educators to ensure more and more students meet our high expectations.

Educationally yours,

Michael Cordell

Founding School Leader and CAO

KIPP DC: The Learning Center

