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To Whom It May Concern:

This letter supports the collaborative partnership of The Nehemiah Foundation of Springfield/Clark County, the Springfield City School District and business community partners who have joined forces to collectively offer non-cognitive skill sets that foster hope and future thinking in the lives of students in our community. With over 90% of the student population qualifying for subsidized meals and a graduation rate that is at an all-time low, we recognize the importance of infusing hope into the lives of the generation to come.

Through the Ohio Community Connectors Grant, Springfield combines a non-cognitive learning approach that gives students exposure to areas of content and development that are consistent with their passion. The innovative Digital Media Center provides students the opportunity to excel creatively in content areas of peak interest. This grant combines three approaches to mentoring--natural, content and program (based on the Connected Mentor model, www.connectedmentor.org), allowing students to learn non-cognitive skills that build hope and future thinking through mentor-assisted relationships, peer partnership and negotiation. The partners in this collaborative are committed to using best practice models of mentoring, non-cognitive skills training and cutting edge technology made available through the Digital Media Center.

Our community is fully vested in reaching students who are looking for hope for their future. As a leader in Springfield, we are committed to support the ongoing work of this collaboration not only for the future direction of individual students, but for the future direction of our community. It is exciting to see strong partners from the non-profit sector, the school district and the business sector readily join hands to guide our kids and our city into the future.

This letter strongly supports the efforts of this partnership to bring about hope for a future generation of Springfield children. We fully expect children who are afforded this opportunity in Springfield, Ohio, to take huge steps to make a significant impact on the world.

Sincerely,

A. R. Kenney