

November 25, 2014

Letter of Support
The Light of the Heart: A Community Art Therapy Project

I am writing on behalf of Communities In Schools, in support of The Light of the Heart Art Therapy Project's request for funding. Communities In Schools is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. In this capacity we have partnered with public school districts in Aurora, Illinois and The Light of the Heart to coordinate the provision of art therapy services for students in Aurora schools. The Light of the Heart has been a welcome and much needed addition to the counseling services that Communities In Schools (CIS) coordinates for Aurora area schools. Many of the students referred to CIS have difficulty verbalizing their experiences due to traumas in their past or inexperience in having supportive relationships with adults. Art therapy enables these students to connect and communicate with their counselor at The Light of the Heart and move forward in the therapeutic process towards their goals of improved school performance and success.

Within the year's time that CIS and The Light of the Heart have worked together to support Aurora students, The Light of the Heart has become an invaluable and highly respected member of our partnering agency community. The Light of the Heart has an active caseload of students which they meet with weekly at the various school sites. Their students speak highly of their services and the positive changes art therapy and The Light of the Heart therapists have supported in their lives. Our goal would be to increase the number of clients that The Light of the Heart can work with through additional funding.

Communities In Schools supports The Light of the Heart in their grant proposal and we look forward to being able to work together to continue providing art therapy services.

Sincerely,

Denise Elsbree, LCSW
Director of Daytime Services
Communities In Schools