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# BUENA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Thomas J. Kearney  
Business Administrator/  
Board Secretary

May 20, 2010

I am writing this letter in support of Learning-Focused. The Buena Regional Middle School (Formerly the John P. Cleary Middle School) had been flagged as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI) by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) based on poor performance on our state assessments and the challenge of meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) as defined by No Child Left Behind legislation. In the eight years that these assessments had existed, this school had failed consistently. Additionally the District is considered "At Risk" because of the level of poverty found within the community.

We began working with Learning-Focused in 2008. As of the 2010 school year we are no longer a SINI. The school has either met "Safe Harbor", AYP and/or exceeded state averages for each sub-group tested for the past two consecutive years. In fact the Buena Regional Middle School is one of nine schools in the state presenting at the NJDOE Effective Practice Conference Showcase in June. Both of these outcomes have been a direct outgrowth of the Learning Focused experiences by staff and engaging students with research based "best practices", employing a model for inclusion supported by acceleration labs and supporting professional growth with the walk thru and peer coaching elements supported by Learning-Focused experiences.

Learning-Focused associates were professional, knowledgeable, and very well received by our staff. Instructors always walk away from these venues with practical knowledge that can be applied in the classroom immediately. A bi-product of each of these workshops has always been positive energy which has manifested itself in teachers focusing on learning and improvement of opportunity for students.

Please call upon me so that I may offer additional support.

