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AMERICAN ARAB CHALDEAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES, INC.

6/1/04

To: Carter, Reddy & Associates, Inc.

From: Dr. Raied Hanna
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I wanted to write this letter in support of the Self Directed Learner's Program (SDLP) developed by Carter, Reddy & Associates, Inc. (C&R). A number of students from my community, including my own daughter, have attended the program, and I have had the pleasure of coordinating certain aspects of the program myself. Because of this, I have intimate knowledge of the program and the positive impact SDLP has had on these students.

The students from my community are all from a Chaldean background and are considered ESL students. Also, the vast majority of their parents speak very little English, if any. Most of these students have only been in the United States for only one or two years, so their exposure to the English language has been very limited.

When these students first came to the SDLP program in October of 2003, they were unable to speak English very well, if at all. Students struggled greatly with their class work and homework, particularly with any reading, writing, and math word problem assignments. This problem was compounded further by the inability of most parents to aid their children with their schoolwork because the parents also displayed severe language issues. Their local schools did not provide them meaningful opportunities to learn in a bilingual setting. In particular, students did not have many opportunities to even ask questions or receive the basic aid they desperately needed. Consequently, all of these factors lead to a cycle of academic and social decline where students were unwilling and unable to get the quality aid necessary for high achievement. These students displayed low self-confidence, particularly in school settings and environments with non-Chaldean students, where English was not the predominant language. The community, as a whole, was in dismay and at a loss for solutions to this critical problem, especially since we face a non-responsive school system.

Upon hearing and learning about the SDLP program developed by C&R, we were excited about the idea of having a truly responsive program right within our own community. From the beginning, C&R was committed to implementing a program that not only could provide results, but also did so in a culturally sensitive environment. To put it plainly, we were not disappointed. On the contrary, the results were even better than we had envisioned. After going to the after-school program for only about three-

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four months, students showed significant improvement in many all areas. First, our students improved their MEAP scores. This was an inspiring accomplishment. As students continued through the program, it was clear that they comprehended various types of English text far more than they ever had previously. Students could now read aloud more fluently, particularly with their pronunciation of English words, than before and were not embarrassed to do so. In the beginning, students had difficulty even reading single sentences, while by the end of the program, they could read paragraphs and short passages with little or no aid. The progress in writing was similar. Most students were unable to write single sentences without extreme difficulty and frustration. However, now they are able to write paragraphs without the aid of their instructors. They better understand the English language as a whole and are able to make meaning of it independently. In math, again, significant gains were made. Students no longer depend on calculators to solve problems. Now, students solve math problems more quickly, more accurately, and more independently than ever before.

Finally, I would like to state some of the other benefits of the SDLP program on these students and our community. We quickly noticed that our students were gaining that self-confidence and those social skills that they lacked previously. Students were not embarrassed to speak aloud in class, to ask questions, to truly learn. They displayed an increased willingness to communicate with their non-Chaldean peers and their instructors, both in the after-school program and in their regular school, because they now were empowered with their newfound growing skills. Students proudly talked about how now they can help their parents with daily tasks, like reading mail, answering phone calls, writing checks, and even serving as translators at times.

I wholeheartedly support Carter, Reddy & Associates, Inc. and their SDLP program. I, personally, found it extremely beneficial to my community and my own home. As a parent, educator, and member of an ESL community, I strongly advise all those interested in high quality and highly effective ESL education, and education in general, to take advantage of the opportunity to work with Carter, Reddy & Associates, Inc. May God bless their efforts in serving our community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Raied Hanna

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