

Letter of Support from Volusia County Schools
Regarding the KNOW THE LAW Program as implemented by
One Voice for Volusia

April 15, 2015

Whereas the Volusia County School Board is committed to providing a school atmosphere conducive to appropriate learning, in which students, parents, and educators conduct themselves in an appropriate, orderly and mutually respectful manner, we offer our support to One Voice for Volusia, a Community Coalition Alliance grantee, for the distribution of **Know the Law** books to Middle and High School students in Volusia County Schools, with a target of reaching all 8th graders through a 50 minute presentation with One Voice for Volusia providing the books, presentation materials and pre and post-tests to demonstrate subject mastery.

This letter of support is offered by Volusia County Schools and is founded on the following principles:

- A. By providing a universal prevention measure such as the **Know the Law** books to all students in a grade level in a culturally competent manner, there will be a reduction in Disproportionate Minority Contacts. They will gain a deeper insight into present rules and regulations, what is expected of them as youth, and the very real consequences they will face if they break the law.
- B. By covering specific laws, statutes, scenarios and consequences in an easy to read and review format, students will have the opportunity to avoid behaviors that lead to delinquency. For 2013, DJJ reported Volusia had 40.6 reports of delinquency per 1,000, with the state comparatively having 27.4 per 1,000. On the 2014 FYSAS, 10.6% of students reported being suspended, 6.7% for carrying a gun and 6.7% for selling drugs. Bringing in the **Know the Law** program is a tool to help reduce both youth delinquency and suspension rates in Volusia County
- C. By providing current and updated statutes and language on Sexting, Bullying, Battery, Human Trafficking, Synthetics, Baker Act/Mental Health, Computer Crimes and Gangs in addition to the more traditionally known laws, our youth will be empowered to create a safe and protective environment for themselves and others, thus ensuring a brighter future for themselves and a healthier community. Florida Charts reports Volusia had 19.6 suicides per 100.000 in 2013 with 10.4 being the community goal. The 2014 FYSAS reported that 39.9% of Middle School students worried about bullying and 11% skipped due to bullying. 3.6% said they had been part of a gang.
- D. By offering a localized version of the **Know the Law** booklet, up-to-date resource and referral information can be distributed to students and their families, thus increasing protective factors. Presently 59% of 2014 FYSAS HS Students & 56% of MS reported *Lack of Commitment to School*.
- E. Volusia County schools will assist One Voice for Volusia in including Law Enforcement partners (School Resource Officers, School Resource Deputies, Correctional Officers and Juvenile Probation Officers) and other appropriate stakeholders trained by One Voice for Volusia in the **Know the Law** Curriculum to deliver the **Know the Law** Program, thus creating a positive, trust-building interaction between students and Law Enforcement and increasing school safety.
- F. By offering the opportunity to utilize pre- and post-tests with **Know the Law** presentations as a supplement to the **Know the Law** Book distribution, Volusia County Schools and partner agencies will have the opportunity to measure student mastery of the content.

This letter of support is signed with the understanding that One Voice for Volusia will offer the **Know the Law** materials and training free of charge as part of their grant funding and will collaborate with Volusia County Schools and other community stakeholders and partners to provide the following:

- A. Opportunities for Volusia County Schools and partner agencies to receive training and staff support in the distribution of the **Know the Law** books, to include, as needed; presentation materials, presenters, PowerPoints and pre- and post-tests, and the collection and posting of data and test results.
- B. Training for all participating law enforcement and One Voice for Volusia program staff and volunteers to effectively deliver the **Know the Law** curriculum that meets the current needs of the community and schools in which they are presenting. All required materials will be provided by One Voice for Volusia for each training.
- C. Coordination of a safe environment to present the materials for at least 50 minutes with access to presentation equipment including a screen and projector where school staff is available to maintain an environment conducive to learning with student participation recommended as a small group up to a small assembly of 80 or less students per presentation.

This letter serves to indicate that Volusia County Schools will support the implementation of the **Know the Law** program through the aforementioned provisions and commits to working with One Voice for Volusia and community stakeholders in the successful implementation of this program in order to ensure the safety and success of Volusia County students.