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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Education Foundation Receives Grant to Expand Conflict Resolution Program ***Funding Received From Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee***

SARASOTA, FL (August 2017) – The Education Foundation of Sarasota County received a \$12,500 grant from the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee (JFSM) to expand the Restorative Strategies Initiative in Sarasota County Schools. The program is designed to promote positive behavior through problem-solving, conflict resolution and the careful establishment of expectations.

During the 2016-2017 school year 220 school staff received the 16-credit hour training through the Restorative Strategies Initiative, including teachers from all elementary schools and six of the seven middle schools. Funding from the JFSM will allow further expansion into all Sarasota County high schools this year with training kicking off at Venice High School in September 2017.

“We want students to feel safe and confident,” noted Jennifer Vigne, President of the Education Foundation responsible for facilitating the program. “And we are grateful that the Jewish Federation recognizes the positive effect this program has on student engagement.”

The Restorative Strategies Initiative outlines a proactive approach that increases dialogue between students and administrators through community-building circles. School officials will bring the circles into lessons, and conversations will be followed with problem-solving discussions where students themselves are encouraged to come up with solutions for behavior problems in school.

Rex Ingerick, a program specialist with the Sarasota County School District, says feedback on the Restorative Strategies Initiative has been incredibly positive. Rex noted that Post-training evaluations indicate that three months after the training, 90% of the participants use the pro-active restorative circles strategy at least once a week and 75% use the academic restorative strategies at least.

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About the Education Foundation of Sarasota County

The Education Foundation of Sarasota County is an independent partner working to advance philanthropic support for Sarasota County Schools. Its mission is to *enhance the potential of students, promote excellence in teaching and inspire innovation in education*. Guided by the belief that education changes lives, the Education Foundation strives to match each donor’s passion with high-impact projects created to ensure students graduate with purpose and are prepared for a post-secondary pathway. The Education Foundation of Sarasota County and its philanthropic investors are champions for students, teachers, and schools. For more information, visit EdFoundationSRQ.org.