



Hollis Innovation Academy  
225 James P. Brawley Drive NW • Atlanta, GA 30314

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To whom it may concern:

Dr. Ford understands that Social and Emotional Learning increases students' school success and decreases problem behaviors by promoting social-emotional competence through relationship skills, responsible decision-making, self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness. She ensures that students, faculty, and staff develop strengths across these competencies, and educates them on how to navigate the world more effectively.

Dr. Ford has set and communicated a school Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) vision that integrates SEL into all aspects of the school. Her vision is aligned to the school's teaching and learning vision and goals. Dr. Ford explicitly models the five core SEL competencies. She models the use of SEL language and strategies, uses systems like Restorative Practices for problem solving and resolving conflict, and welcomes feedback from students on her Principal's Advisory Council (PAC). Dr. Ford creates an environment for the systematic growth of SEL in students and across the school community. She builds capacity for increasing SEL skills in students. She provides time and structure for daily explicit SEL instruction Monday through Thursday for thirty minutes – known as CREW. Fridays are reserved for House Meetings and Community Meetings. During this time, students are engaged in the Second Step curriculum provided through the Committee for Children by CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning). Dr. Ford effectively uses the school's SEL Coach to prioritize the work. She also builds capacity for increasing SEL skills in staff by providing professional learning monthly through her SEL Coach. Dr. Ford connects SEL to other schools and district initiatives. She uses the school's strategic plan to integrate SEL into all areas of instruction, school culture, and student/staff/family programming. She also uses Restorative Practices as a tool to build relationships and repair harm through the assistance of her behavior team.

Dr. Ford has an innate ability to build culture that reflects high expectations, inclusivity, teamwork, and joy for students, staff, and stakeholders. Dr. Ford prioritizes revenue and talent to secure a Wrap-Around team that works in collaboration with one another to unite staff, students, and the broader community around an inspirational vision of success rooted in EL Education's three dimensions of student achievement.

Dr. Ford has a clear roadmap to not only think of the vision, but the plan to see it through. The impact she has is guaranteed for a better Atlanta Public School. Because of these things, Dr. Diamond Ford is deserving of the EL Education Silverberg Leadership Award.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Toliver, Jr.  
Social and Emotional Learning Coach  
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