

August 23, 2023

Debra Beavin
Economic Development Administration
Robert Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, Suite 01
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Ms. Beavin;

I'm writing to you in support of the incubator project at the former Oldham Elementary School. As a school Superintendent, I'm excited to see what opportunities emerge for our students as this incubator takes shape. Our high school already has a thriving and very popular Career & Technical Center with programs of study that include Culinary Arts, Construction Technology, Electrical Technology, Graphic Communications, Information Technology, and Engineering. We also have a thriving fine arts program. I can readily see where we could work with the Oldham incubator to provide students with the added opportunity of taking their training and becoming entrepreneurs.

Our City schools have long had a reputation for educating holistically—which is to say, with the whole child in mind. Our ability to help our students transition into the workforce, though, has been limited—as is normally the case. The Oldham incubator could provide us with a way to help those non-college bound students transition into the workforce and become thriving members of our community, without having to leave and invest in expensive additional training. And those entrepreneurs would become thriving members of our community—creating more jobs, filling empty storefronts, and enriching our community immeasurably.

I also believe that a city that is thriving—and not full of empty storefronts—provides hope to our youth, increases their sense of vitality, and creates deeper attachments to the community—all things that once again impact the whole child.

As a society, we've come to the conclusion that not every kid is college bound—and that skills, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurship are just as valuable to our community. The Oldham incubator would tell the world that we more than talk this, we walk this: we value entrepreneurship.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.



Dr. Sandy Forand
Superintendent of Schools
East Providence