

LASALLE SCHOOL

An Agent of Healing since 1854



June 2015 *Special Announcement*

LaSalle selected for two-country brain science cohort initiative *Caring for the 'whole' child to take on new dimensions*

LaSalle School is one of 15 human service organizations to participate in a three-year Brain Science Cohort Initiative designed to integrate neurosciences into transformative policy and practice. Partnering on the project are The Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Norlien Foundation. The announcement came late last week. While selected sites have yet to be announced, LaSalle is one of ten from the United States and five from Canada.

LaSalle successfully met stringent application requirements to demonstrate successful inroads in the dissemination of brain science information as well as impact on policy and practice, and explain plans for accelerating and aligning those activities throughout the non-profit human services sector to create lasting systems change and influence policy that would improve the lives of youth, families, and communities.

An extension of LaSalle's work

LaSalle's cohort application stated: 'While we may not have realized it, the importance of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and trauma awareness has been a part of our work and mission for some time. We see the Brain Science Cohort as an important extension of what we already do and what we hope to accomplish in the future.'

For several years, LaSalle has reached across child care disciplines to share best practices in ACEs and the implications of trauma and brain science as well as advocating on behalf of policy and practice with affirmative, layered, and sustained strategies. Just last month, LaSalle's staff conducted ACEs awareness and Trauma Training for the entire staff of the Albany County Family Court including clerks, uniformed security, and the judges themselves. LaSalle also presented at a district wide inservice day in one of the area's largest school districts.

How cohort impacts LaSalle's direct care to youth and families

On staff at LaSalle are professionals committed to implementing brain science strategies and emerging technologies to care for the 'whole' child. Each youth's growth and wellness is achieved when they work with clinicians to overcome obstacles to understand the reasons behind negative behaviors. This collaborative work place LaSalle's young people in very advantageous positions to partner with staff to reveal still more key insights into a youth's neurological development.

"What is quite clear is that while LaSalle School will, of course, experience considerable benefits from this [Brain Science Cohort] effort, the real objective for each of the 15 sites is to have a much larger impact that will contribute to improved services as well as enhanced preventative efforts," said LaSalle Executive Director Bill Wolff. He stressed the 'across-the-board' nature of this cohort's impact on child caring organizations ranging from traditional school districts to family courts.

Wolff congratulated LaSalle board members for their encouragement and support of this most recent accomplishment. "I trust this is a proud moment for each of you, as LaSalle not only invests in improving the lives of the children and families we serve directly through our program, but also invests in improving conditions for all in need of assistance and our communities," he said.

To ensure diversity . . .

the Alliance's Selection Committee identified the final 15 sites considering the target systems of focus and geographic location. This committee was comprised of representatives from the *Harvard Center on the Developing Child*, *Nemours, Here 2 There Consulting*, *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*, *The Norlien Foundation*, *Community Science*, *Wisconsin's Office of Children's Mental Health*, *The Health Federation of Philadelphia*, and *FrameWorks Institute*.