



BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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To Whom This May Concern,

Brian Gordon developed and administered a Social Learning Program for a group of middle school students who struggle with having a positive sense of self and the ability to navigate the social arena independently due to processing and anxiety issues. This addressed a need in the Beverly Schools by providing a program that would prevent regression during the long summer break. Brian and his staff worked closely with six students and their parents. The students, who call themselves the "Original 6", appropriately named the program "School's Out". Through community building, structured activities, and trips to places of interests these students were explicitly taught skills that they have generalized and demonstrated during this school year. Parents and students have been empowered to take control of their social lives and are still meeting once a month, as a group. Reports from parents and students have been extremely positive and we hope to build upon this program to reach more students who would benefit from these practical, hands-on interventions. Brian has made a significant difference in the lives of our students. We owe him a debt of gratitude.

Brian Gordon has a keen sense of the needs of children and young adults falling within the Autism Spectrum. He understands the importance of teaching communication and social skills to help students feel more confident and competent, opening the door for risk-taking. His "think outside of the box" approach to using the community as a teaching ground to provide students with real life experiential and situational learning opportunities proved to be invaluable for our students programming this past summer. He has an uncanny and amazing ability to make learning relevant, interesting and fun, creating long-lasting impact. We look forward to our continued work with Brian connecting students with their peers and community in the coming year.

Debra O'Connor, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Beverly Public Schools
Karen Wilk, Out of District Administrative Team Chair, Beverly Public Schools