



Sharon Williams, Ed.D.  
*Superintendent of Schools*

To: RIMSD 41 Board of Education  
From: Dr. Sharon Williams  
Cabinet Champion: Scott Vance, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning  
Date: March 10, 2026  
Re: Contract for Service: Connect with Kids (CWK) & Empirical Education(EE)

The Rock Island - Milan School District was awarded a 5-year grant in the amount of \$3,835,171.68 to partner with two (2) organizations, Connect with Kids (CWK) and Empirical Education, Inc. (EE), around social emotional learning (SEL) and mental health at the high school level. This grant is awarded by the U.S. Department of Education and is called Education Innovation and Research Grant (EIR). The grant began January 1, 2023 and will end on December 31, 2027.

RIMSD 41 (specifically Rock Island High School) was chosen to be the lead research school district in part due to our work on cultural competence and the diversity of the district. The district was contacted by representatives from the two partnering organizations in the hope of researching the effectiveness of a SEL curriculum designed for high school students. Rock Island High School will be the research school for this grant. The curriculum is a project-based learning program designed to increase student attendance and engagement, decrease discipline concerns, and improve academic outcomes. RIMSD 41 will serve as the fiscal agent for this grant.

The title for the grant project is called: How Are The Children: Increasing Social Emotional/Mental Health in the High School Environment (HATC). The grant was named from a historic tribal traditional greeting, acknowledging the high value the tribe always placed on their children's well being. If the children are doing well, the whole community will be successful.

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the one-year contract for service with CWK Network, Inc (6849 Peachtree Dunwoody Road, Building 4-150 Atlanta, Georgia 30328) in the amount of \$147,819.00; and with Empirical Education (2120 University Avenue Berkeley, California 94704) in the amount of \$184,279.00 for the time period of January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026. EIR (Education and Innovation Research) grant funds will be used for these contracts.

**Investment Period: January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026**

**Total Investment: \$332,098.00**

**Funding Source: Education and Innovation Research Grant Funds**

**Rock Island-Milan School District #41**

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