



February 7, 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Bonnie Hanes, OMC Executive Director
(248) 338-4280, ext. 212
bhanes@mediation-omc.org

Oakland Mediation Center Responds To The Needs Of Schools

Bloomfield Hills, Michigan... As a result of a school needs assessment survey, Oakland Mediation Center (OMC) has implemented changes in school based programming. "OMC's mission is to help the community peacefully resolve conflict through mediation and education," said Bonnie Hanes, OMC Executive Director. "Responding to school and community needs is critical in achieving this mission."

At the start of the 2011/2012 school year, OMC distributed a School Needs Assessment Survey to local schools seeking input on priority areas of violence prevention in their school. OMC used the data to accurately assess and develop programs that best meet the needs of schools in the area.

Of schools surveyed, bullying (91%) was viewed as a prevalent issue and needed programs included bullying prevention/intervention (88%) and diversity education for students (66%). OMC will continue to provide the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program as it demonstrates great impact on reducing bullying behavior and provides a forum for diversity education. In addition, OMC has expanded program consultation from 12 to 18 school months with no fee increase.

OMC will be offering the "Building Classroom Connections Through Restorative Practices" workshop to equip school personnel with the necessary skills to facilitate the Circle Process in their classrooms. This is a result of 84% of those surveyed reporting that they are not currently using restorative practices however, 75% reported that restorative practices would be useful in their school and that they are most interested in training to conduct restorative processes (81%).

Schools surveyed reported student/student conflict (85%) as a prevalent issue and that there was needed programming in conflict resolution education for students (76%) and an interest in education for adults on how to respond in a restorative way to students (84%). OMC addresses this need by offering a "Conflict Management in the Classroom" workshop.

95% of schools surveyed reported that cost was an important factor in implementing programs. Aware of this funding challenge, OMC has continued to find ways to offset the cost for schools and will be holding a Peers Making Peace: Facilitator Training in 2012 at a cost reduction of over 60%.

To learn more about the school needs assessment survey or programming, please contact Kenzi Bisbing, Youth Services Manager, at (248) 338-4280, Ext. 216, or kbisbing@mediation-omc.org.

Oakland Mediation Center is a private non-profit organization that has served the community since 1989 by providing mediation services for individuals, businesses, courts, schools and agencies; 40-hour Civil, Domestic and Advanced Mediator training as well as conflict resolution, peer mediation, bullying prevention/intervention, and restorative practices in schools. Visit OMC's web site at www.mediation-omc.org.

###