



World Language High School

3120 South Kostner Avenue
Chicago, IL 60623

February 17, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

The What's Up with Manhood program provides life skills and social-emotional support that help our male students tremendously, resulting in improved student attendance, grades and behavior. Their work in both group and individual settings has truly made an impact on our students.

World Language High School students who have been involved with the What's Up program have demonstrated a significant growth in their confidence both in and out of the classroom. This is due to the one-on-one mentoring provided through the program to our male students. Many of the students involved in Options for Youth enter the program dealing with low self-esteem and poor social-emotional skills. The What's Up with manhood program helps these students change their outlook by providing self-worth, confidence, and skills for problem solving and conflict-resolution.

Our students are in desperate need of male mentoring programs, and the Options for You is the perfect fit. Many of these students are first generation, living in a low social-economic, gang-heavy neighborhood. Their families are dealing with fears of being undocumented, with parents and children acclimating to a new way of life. The What's Up program helps our students to navigate being successful, go on to college, and overall become a quality young man.

Also, I personally appreciate working with the What's Up mentors. They take the initiative to help students whenever they can, and they show an internal passion for what they do. Our students seek the Options for Youth mentors for help and advice on a daily basis, and the mentors are always accessible to students.

Option for Youth's What's Up with Manhood mentoring initiative has been a blessing to have here at World Language High School. Its impact on our students has been overwhelmingly positive.

Respectfully,

Margaret Loranger
Margaret Loranger
Principal

Margaret Loranger
Principal

World Language High School
3120 S. Kostner Ave.
Chicago, IL 60623

(773) 535-4334
wl.lvhs.org

Infinity Math, Science, and Technology High School

3120 South Kostner Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60623

773.535.4214 VOICE 773.535.4270 FAX

Erin Walker Principal efgrover@cps.edu

Salvador Venegas Assistant Principal svenegas@cps.edu

February 17th, 2026

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to support the continued funding of The *What's Up with Manhood* program at Infinity High School. This program has provided our young men with the social and emotional support and life skills to help them navigate their lives through high school and beyond. As a result of participation in the program, participants have demonstrated increased student attendance, improved grades and reported self-efficacy.

Program participants often enter with feelings of low self-esteem and poor social emotional skills. In addition to the daily challenges they face- first generation in this country, low socio-economic conditions, and residence in gang-ridden communities. Now, they are faced with the additional fears of being undocumented. Their challenges are real and omni-present.

Through the *What's Up with Manhood* program, these young men gradually learn to effectively change their own narratives to have more positive outcomes. After participation in the program, LVLHS students report that they are more confident in and out of the classroom and attribute this growth to the one:one mentoring provided through the program. The program is helping our students to navigate their post secondary steps- often taking them to college or trade school.

On a more personal note, I appreciate the work I have been able to do with the *What's Up* mentors. They have a passion for the work they do and they are rightfully proud of the success they have had.

Programs like these served as one of the cornerstones of the work we do here at Infinity. We cannot do all of the work in silo. We need the support of organizations like Options for Youth and their programs to help our students achieve success. Please continue to provide funding for this program.

Respectfully,



Erin Walker