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**Learn4Life's Mission Academy Schools Boost At-Risk Student Success through  
Edge Foundation Coaching**

PACOIMA, CALIF. (September 24, 2020) -- Three Mission Academy schools in Southern California, which are part of the Learn4Life school system, have partnered with research-based Edge Foundation to train and provide their staff with executive-style, one-to-one coaching for its at-risk students that are struggling to get their high school diploma.

"We are committed to equity and believe that every young person has potential. Edge training brings another level to our personalized learning by improving the executive skill functions in our students. These are skills that have made top business leaders successful," said Christine Kasitz, area superintendent of virtual schools and programs. "Learning new strategies to plan, prioritize and execute is critical for succeeding in school and at work. With Edge coaching, we can quickly train all our teachers, counselors and principals with the same executive skills to best empower our students."

Neil Peterson, Edge Foundation founder, noted, "After seeing how top executives benefit from coaching, we saw an opportunity to make a difference by focusing on at-risk youth – many of which are dropouts. It is incredibly rewarding to see the turnaround in this student population. Our coaching coupled with Mission Academy's personalized learning model is helping hundreds of students enhance their social/emotional learning and reach their full potential."

Edge coaching increases students' ability to:

- Make good decisions
- Learn skills needed to succeed in school – the ability to plan, prioritize, initiate, stay on task, focus, follow up and adjust to change
- Realize their many abilities and channel them to achieve
- Work hard and remember the details needed to finish a project
- Control impulsiveness and learn how to fit in
- Gain the right executive function tools to do their best
- Keep their eye on the prize and understand that a diploma is critical to breaking the poverty cycle
- Be motivated to come to school every day, earn their diploma and have a plan for college and/or job training

Many of the students have faced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which include abuse, neglect, family/household challenges and other traumas. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 5.2 million school-aged children, or about 10 percent, in the United States have formal diagnoses of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), one of the best-known barriers to social and emotional learning. The National Health Interview suggests that these numbers do not include those who are undiagnosed.

The Edge Foundation helps students succeed at school by training school personnel – teachers, paraprofessionals, security personnel, counselors and administrators - to provide one-on-one, weekly, 15- to 20-minute coaching to individual students.

“Edge coaches help students succeed by helping them develop agency – the ability to successfully act on their own behalf to solve problems and make good decisions in school and in life,” Peterson said.

A study by Wayne State University looked at Edge Foundation coaching methods involving students from 10 universities and community colleges. The study was the largest and most comprehensive study of ADHD coaching conducted to date. The research team determined that the Edge Coaching model was four times more effective than any other educational intervention in helping students improve executive functioning and related skills as measured by the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI; Weinstein and Palmer, 2002).

Schools and individual teachers are required to produce results, close performance gaps, boost achievement and reduce dropout rates. Edge coaching can help them achieve success with all students. Edge Foundation coaches currently work in more than 90 schools and organizations in Washington State, Oregon, California, Pennsylvania, Mississippi and New York.

**About the Edge Foundation:** The Edge Foundation aims to give each student a coach so they can complete their education, realize their full potential and pursue their passion. The foundation focuses on children, teens and young adults at risk of dropping out of school - non-traditional learners with executive function challenges that can come from ADHD and adverse childhood experiences. Learn more at [www.edgefoundation.org](http://www.edgefoundation.org).

**About Mission Academy:** Mission Academy is an online charter high school that helps students who need options in education. Its personalized learning model is delivered via live online classes and virtual tutoring sessions and makes learning safe and enjoyable. Students receive flexibility, custom-designed coursework and cutting-edge digital curriculum, so earning a high school diploma is engaging. Unique to most online education, Mission Academy is truly a team effort between the student, teacher and mentors – all dedicated to the success of each student.

It is part of Learn4Life schools. Learn more at <https://learn4life.org/>.