

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Andrea Daniel
313-672-5200
andrea@dmcstrategies.com

**Blanche Kelso Bruce Strict Discipline Academy
Discontinues One of its Instructional Programs**

DETROIT – November 3, 2016 – Today, the Blanche Kelso Academy Board of Directors (BKB) announced the discontinuation of one of its three educational programs in coming weeks.

On November 15, 2016, BKB will discontinue the Community program which has, for 14 years in various forms and locations, provided alternative instruction, social services and transportation for its students in grades 5-12, (serving grades 5-9 this current year), who had experienced difficulty in traditional classroom settings. BKB staff is currently contacting parents/guardians to provide assistance in transitioning their children into schools that provide other alternative educational programs.

BKB will continue to provide full instructional programs at the Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility, and in several residential sites throughout the city of Detroit, continuing in its mission to provide effective educational services to students, who due to legal and/or other environmental risk factors impacting their lives, are unable to participate in regular school settings

Enrollment at the BKB Community program fell short of projections by 40 percent for the 2016-17 fiscal year which, when combined with structural changes limiting access to funding for social services, significantly impacts its operational budget adopted by the board less than six months ago. The revenue shortfall prevents BKB from continuing the Community program in an impactful and meaningful way, said Judy Pendergrass, President of the BKB Board of Directors.

“We believe in our students, and we believe in our programs,” Ms. Pendergrass said. “Therefore, continuing a program that would fall short of our instructional standards while ultimately shortchanging our students could not be an option.”

Before the start of this year, BKB eliminated grades 10-12 from the Community program. All of those students were successfully transitioned into similar programs with the assistance of the Wayne Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), BKB’s Authorizer and Intermediate School District.

As of November 15, BKB will continue to serve grades 5-12 at the Detention and Residential sites.

“We are committed to serving this student population in the future,” said Diana Stewart, Vice President of the BKB Board of Directors. “It is our goal to make the necessary adjustments to restore these programs and expand our services because our students need and deserve it.”

###