

## **EVSC Foundation**

### **Background**

The mission of Hangers is to provide all seasons of clothing, shoes and hygiene products to EVSC students in need.

Hangers is uniquely placed in the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC) to provide clothing to students throughout the EVSC. We serve students from all 40 schools (and virtual school) with their everyday and uniform clothing needs. We fulfill this mission by inviting students to come to Hangers to shop, as well as providing a “shop-for” option for students. With the shop-for option, staff select the needed items for students to attend school: shoes, socks, underwear, hygiene items, uniforms, coats, and daily clothes. We provide this special service to help with the difficulty families or volunteers have transporting students to Hangers.

### **Statement of Need**

Hangers addresses the need for clothes for the most distressed population in the EVSC. The families we serve are the families with limited opportunities to shop, and with limited income for purchasing clothing for their children. We have a growing population of homeless students, children in foster care, and families who have experienced a fire, flood or domestic issue that caused them to flee the house with only the clothes on their backs. On average, we serve 2,500 children per year. We are on pace for that number again this year.

The overarching goal of Hangers is threefold. First, we strive to help build children’s self-esteem by offering them the opportunity to shop for their own clothing. Often, their trip to Hangers is the only shopping trip they will have this year—for many, their first shopping trip ever. Second, we want to reduce bullying, again, by providing clothing for students that put them on par with other students. Third, we work to increase school attendance. We are aware of other programs, and certainly many schools have a clothes closet, however we are not aware of any program quite like Hangers in the Tri-State Area. If one exists, we would love to meet them and share ideas! Hangers relies on the generous Evansville community. Your donations of new and gently-used clothes are what allow us to create this opportunity for students.

### **Proposal Description**

The process is simple: a school makes the referral stating that a child needs clothes, and we make an appointment for the child to come to Hangers (or we shop for them). No financial information is taken or needed. Schools are our eyes in the community. For our grant request, we are asking for \$5,000.00 of the \$25,000.00 to be used on payroll for staff (the same ratios will be used for the \$10,000.00 grant). We have 4 staff who work 20 hours per week and one Director who works 25 hours per week, all positions part time and all without benefits. We are employees of the EVSC Foundation, not the EVSC. Hangers alone is responsible for securing funding for its entire operating budget each year. EVSC provides us a superior location in the former North High School. We do not pay rent, utilities, or maintenance. That is the fantastic benefit EVSC provides Hangers.

We will use the remaining portion of the grant to purchase clothing items that are not donated in the quantities we need. This includes but is not limited to: shoes, winter coats, uniform pants and shirts, underwear, hygiene items, and boys’ clothes in general. We will target the funds for purchases when the best price presents itself. We work directly with Costco, Macy’s, Target, Wal-Mart, Old Navy, The Children’s Place, and more to purchase items at the best value available. We partner with the EVSC, St. Vincent de Paul, Potter’s Wheel, and other shelters in town to pass on donated items that we don’t retain. These items are usually outdated items that students will not choose to wear. We believe Hangers is a distinctive organization without peer in the area of donating clothes to students, all free of charge.

### **Proposal Outcome**

At the end of each school year we send an evaluation to the person in the school most responsible for referring to Hangers. The school personnel respond that 95% of all students show better attendance, and 95% report reduced bullying after visiting Hangers. 100% of students want to return. We help build a stronger community when our students attend school, feel better about themselves, and do not live in fear of reprisal for worn clothes.