

South Kent School Awarded \$100,000 E.E. Ford Foundation Grant to Advance Cardinal Strong Program

Alumni-led 2:1 match doubles investment in student resilience and well-being

SOUTH KENT, CT, UNITED STATES, March 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [South Kent School](#), an independent boarding school for boys in grades 9–12 and postgraduates, today announced that it has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Advisory Board of the Edward E. Ford Foundation to support and expand its Cardinal Strong Program, a comprehensive initiative focused on emotional resilience, mental wellness, and healthy decision-making for young men.

Through the remarkable leadership of the Class of 1974 and additional South Kent donors, every dollar awarded unlocked a 2:1 match. Now, with \$428,000 already raised, the Class of 1974 has set a powerful standard of commitment to this program's success.

Rooted in South Kent's Trinity of Values, Simplicity of Life, Self-Reliance, and Directness of Purpose, Cardinal Strong is designed to equip students with the emotional intelligence, coping strategies, and leadership skills necessary to navigate the increasing pressures of modern adolescence. As outlined in the School's grant proposal, the program provides structured emotional resilience education for students in grades 9–12, alongside faculty training, media literacy instruction, alternative wellness experiences, and expanded access to counseling support.

"At South Kent, we believe resilience is not incidental. It must be taught, modeled, and practiced," said Brian D. Sullivan, Head of School. "The Edward E. Ford Foundation's investment affirms that preparing young men for life requires more than academic rigor. It requires intentional



SOUTH KENT
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South Kent School founded in 1923



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formation through emotional literacy, healthy masculinity, and the courage to seek help when needed. We are profoundly grateful to the Class of 1974 and our alumni community for stepping forward to ensure this work moves forward at full strength.”

With this funding, Cardinal Strong will expand key partnerships with organizations that provide structured

programming in emotional resilience, stress management, and leadership development. The grant will also support media literacy training to help students navigate digital stress and misinformation, faculty professional development in mental health awareness, guest speakers and workshops, and access to consulting clinical neuropsychological support for students who may otherwise lack resources.

The initiative aligns directly with South Kent’s core competency framework, particularly its emphasis on Emotional Resilience, defined by the School as the ability to manage adversity, regulate emotions, and maintain a positive and disciplined outlook in the face of challenges.

The Edward E. Ford Foundation, long recognized for strengthening independent schools nationwide, selected Cardinal Strong as a program that advances student well-being in a proactive and sustainable manner. South Kent plans to deploy the funds over the next four years to build infrastructure, provide professional development, refine assessment tools, and position Cardinal Strong for long-term endowment support.

Beyond establishing the endowed fund for Cardinal Strong, this initiative will equip every South Kent student with structured resilience training, expand alternative wellness programming, integrate digital literacy into the curriculum, and ensure that no student is denied access to counseling resources because of financial constraints.

“The Class of 1974 understood immediately that this is not simply a program, it is a true commitment to the formation of young men,” Sullivan added. “Their leadership inspired others to join them. Cardinal Strong is a community-wide investment in character, health, and purpose.”

As South Kent enters its second century, Cardinal Strong reflects the School’s enduring mission: to prepare young men to succeed in college and thrive as thoughtful, engaged citizens in an increasingly complex world.

For more information about South Kent School or to further support Cardinal Strong, please visit www.southkentschool.org.

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About South Kent School

Founded in 1923, South Kent School prepares young men to succeed in college and thrive as thoughtful, engaged citizens in a rapidly changing and intensely competitive world. Rooted in the values of simplicity of life, self-reliance, and directness of purpose, South Kent offers a transformational boarding school experience in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut.

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