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RSF Partners with CPS to Replicate High-Performing School Models through Renaissance 2010

CPS CEO to Recommend Replication of Two Innovative Traditional CPS School Models
Boeing-Sponsored Performance Pipeline Program is First of Its Kind in the Nation to Create Process for Replication of Innovative Traditional Public Schools

Chicago, IL (10/09/07) – Through a partnership between the Renaissance Schools Fund (RSF), the Chicago Public Schools and the Boeing Company, Chicago becomes the first city in the nation to create a process, the Performance Pipeline Program, for successfully replicating high-performing traditional public school models. RSF is pleased to announce that two schools which have participated in its Performance Pipeline Program will be among those schools that CPS CEO Arne Duncan recommends to the Board of Education on Tuesday, October 9th, for approval in the next round of Renaissance 2010.

The schools to be recommended to open next fall are replications of the Walt Disney Magnet School in Uptown and the John C. Burroughs Elementary School in Brighton Park. Leaders from both schools have been supported through the Performance Pipeline Program, which was created last year by the Renaissance Schools Fund with a \$1 million grant from the Boeing Company.

“With support from our city’s civic, business, and foundation communities, the Renaissance Schools Fund is helping to take high-performing school models – whether they are private school models, charter school models, or in this case, innovative models found within the existing Chicago public school system – to scale in order to drive competition and innovation system-wide,” said Phyllis Lockett, CEO of the Renaissance Schools Fund, the private partner to Ren10 in fundraising, strategy and accountability and home to the Performance Pipeline Program.

“We focused our contribution to Renaissance 2010 on the performance school model because we believe the long-term success of this initiative lies in creating and developing strong traditional public schools,” said Anne Roosevelt, Boeing vice president for Global Corporate Citizenship. “The Performance Pipeline Program takes what there is to learn from the best of our current schools and complements it with comprehensive training and mentorship to create more high-performing public school options.”

“We see this program as a framework of how we can franchise successful models within the school district and create more high performing school options for Chicago families,” said Dr. Barbara Eason-Watkins, Chief Education Officer of the Chicago Public Schools.

“While the schools chosen for replication may be considered traditional in that they are existing public schools, they are definitely not typical schools,” said Lockett. “Both have outstanding performance and offer many innovations that we look for in high-performing models.”

Disney and Burroughs were chosen by RSF in consultation with Dr. Eason-Watkins. To begin the program, each school nominated a fellow to lead the replication effort and to become principal of the proposed school. The leaders of the existing schools committed to mentoring the fellows through the design and launch of the new schools.

Since Spring, the fellows have worked to design their new schools, participating in a 20-week Fellowship Program that includes: an ongoing relationship with a dedicated Replication Manager with expertise in new school development, 60 hours of direct technical support from national experts, visits to high-performing schools across the nation, and technical assistance from RSF staff.

Dr. Kathleen Hagstrom, principal of Disney Magnet School, is currently mentoring a principal candidate for whom she hopes will be the leader of a second Disney campus. “Being a part of the replication project has provided the Disney School community the opportunity to reflect on its strengths as well as assess areas in need of improvement. Disney has a talented staff, with a record of educational accomplishments and we’ve had the ability to make our dreams come true. We see “replication” as a philanthropic endeavor which allows us to share in a collaborative venture.”

Jim Ford, a national education expert from the Raza Development Fund, who counseled the two design teams, says the program is the first of its kind in the country to support existing school leaders in the replication of their schools: “Creating a new school is not easy but is not uncommon. However RSF, CPS and Boeing’s effort to launch schools based on high performing traditional schools is truly unique and has the exciting potential to foster the development of stronger extended learning communities across Chicago.”

“We want to see more of our successful schools replicated,” said Chicago Public Schools CEO, Arne Duncan. “Within the next few years, I would like to see as many as ten second campuses of successful traditional CPS schools opened.”

The CPS schools selected for replication feature numerous innovations, such as a longer school day or more professional development than most traditional public schools. Below is a list of key features.

John C. Burroughs School (Brighton Park)

The original John C. Burroughs School was constructed in 1893 and has served as a strong community school, serving 548 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade in Brighton Park.

Burroughs offers a data driven culture and features total collaboration between staff, parents and the community. At Burroughs, CPS teachers voted to extend the school day because they realized their students needed more time for instruction.

The school offers a literature and writing magnet program, algebra for eighth graders, and accelerated reading and math programs starting in the fifth grade. It also partners with the Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Scholarship and Guidance Association.

The school's model has proven to be successful. Last year's ISAT scores show that 74.6 percent of the original school's students met or exceeded reading standards (compared to a CPS average of 60.9 percent). Also, 84.1 percent of its students met or exceeded math standards (compared to a CPS average of 68.6 percent), and 78.5 percent met or exceeded composition standards (compared to a CPS average of 64.1 percent).

The original school has also been named both a School of Distinction and a Rising Star, and the Illinois State Board of Education has recognized Burroughs as an "Illinois Spotlight School."

Walt Disney Magnet School (Uptown)

The Walt Disney Magnet School has a similar record for high-achievement. The original school opened in 1974 and was the first magnet school in Chicago. Over the past 33 years, the school has developed strong educational programs, operational supports, outstanding leadership and extensive strategic partnerships.

Disney serves 1,536 students in grades preschool through eighth, 80% of whom are minorities and 75% are low-income. As a magnet school, Disney accepts students from across the city through a non-selective CPS lottery system. The school is part of the Fine Arts Magnet School Cluster, delivering arts and technology-integrated curriculum. Its rigorous curriculum meets the diverse needs of its student body, with a gifted program, bilingual education in Spanish and Urdu, special education, and Direct Instruction and Fast ForWord for struggling learners. Disney's staff is continually involved in professional development provided by the S.T.A.R.S. professional development team.

Disney continues to outperform most CPS schools. Last year's ISAT scores show 82 percent of Disney students met or exceeded standards in a composite of the tests (compared to a CPS average of 64.1 percent), an increase of near 30 percentage points over six years. 78.8 percent of Disney students met or exceeded standards in reading (compared to a CPS average of 60.9 percent), while 86 percent of students met or exceeded math standards (compared to a CPS average of 68.6 percent).

The Renaissance Schools Fund (RSF) is the private partner to the city of Chicago and the Chicago Public Schools on Renaissance 2010 for fundraising, strategy and accountability. Since 2005, RSF has raised \$41 million and helped in the creation of 38 public schools in Chicago's underserved communities, among a total of 55 schools created through Ren10 so far.

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