PRESS RELEASE
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MAYOR BALLARD ANNOUNCES CITY INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROJECT

INDIANAPOLIS – Today, Mayor Greg Ballard joined leaders in philanthropy and education to announce a partnership formed to implement an intensive community school model in two Indianapolis schools – Challenge Foundation Academy, a Mayor-sponsored charter elementary school in the Meadows, and Lynwood Elementary School in Decatur Township. The City of Indianapolis will invest $180,000 during the 2009 calendar year and will partner with United Way of Central Indiana (IWCI) who will coordinate all of the programming. The community school concept is not a new one, and in fact, different models have been implemented and are operating in a limited way in Indianapolis today.

“The education level expected of children reflects the priority of its citizens and its government, and the investment in our community’s future begins with the students of Indianapolis,” said Mayor Ballard. “I believe every student needs our attention in order to make sure they are achieving their potential.”

The community school model enables teachers to monitor a student’s academic performance as well as a student’s participation in other in-school programming like tutoring, health-related activities or recreation. As a result, teachers are better equipped to develop individualized plans and recommend specific interventions for each student.

The most intensive model involves hiring one full-time staff member for each school, who is employed by a community organization, but physically works inside the school. In short, these staff members work as Community School Coordinators and aim to bring community resources to bear for students. The Coordinators who have been hired for this project will be employees of Forest Manor Multi-Service Center and Mary Rigg Neighborhood Center.

A key benefit to this arrangement is the personal connection each coordinator has with both the students and the teachers in the school. This close relationship allows the coordinator to assist teachers by providing information about and access to both academic and non-academic services needed by the individual students.
“I am excited to implement this project in two great Indianapolis schools,” said Mayor Ballard. “I would ultimately like to see all Marion County schools adopt this strategy.”

The first programs the new Coordinators will work to implement include UWCI’s successful ReadUP tutoring program, as well as Project SEED, a mathematics intervention that utilizes trained mathematicians to teach higher level math to elementary students.

“United Way of Central Indiana is pleased to join the Mayor to announce the expansion of the community schools concept in Indianapolis, a concept which we fully support,” said Ellen Annala, President and CEO of United Way of Central Indiana. “Likewise, we are also pleased to share ReadUP with students at Challenge Foundation Academy and Lynwood Elementary.”

**PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS**

**About United Way of Central Indiana’s ReadUP**

ReadUP connects volunteer tutors with elementary school students who need help reading. Volunteer tutors work with these students on vocabulary, fluency and comprehension to enhance their skill level during three one hour sessions per week for the school year. For more information, contact United Way at 925-READ or readup@uwci.org or visit [www.uwci.org](http://www.uwci.org).

**About Project SEED** ([www.projectseed.org](http://www.projectseed.org))

Founded in 1963, Project SEED is a nonprofit organization that works in partnership with school districts, universities and corporations with the goal of using mathematics to increase the educational options of urban youth, the program is still on the cutting edge. Project SEED employs highly trained mathematicians and master teachers who use a unique Socratic method of instruction to teach higher mathematics to entire classes of low-achieving students. Simultaneously, they provide teachers with state-of-the-art professional development based on modeling and coaching. Similar methods have proven successful in training for adults in corporations, universities and community settings.

Longitudinal evaluations of Project SEED’s work with elementary school students show, without exception, that students’ mathematics scores increase significantly. There is also an increase in the number of students taking algebra and higher mathematics courses when they reach high school and beyond. For more information, please visit the Project SEED website at [www.projectseed.org](http://www.projectseed.org).

**About Community Schools**

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone – all day, every day, evenings and weekends. Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities. For more information, please visit the Coalition for Community Schools website at [www.communityschools.org](http://www.communityschools.org).

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