CITY ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR CEOs FOR NEW SCHOOLS

Application deadline set for March 1, 2011

INDIANAPOLIS – Applications for consideration for the CEOs for New Schools competition are now being accepted with a final deadline of March 1, 2011. In June of this year, Mayor Greg Ballard announced that the Walton Family Foundation pledged to award up to $1.3 million to promote and establish new community-anchored Mayor-sponsored charter schools. The new competition – CEOs for New Schools – will use a $125,000 matching grant to provide each selected organization the opportunity to both advance its mission in a unique and innovative way and harness its leadership capacity to tackle a vital community issue. Five community-based organizations will use the funds to consider establishing new schools, and if these organizations successfully submit a charter school proposal and meet the Foundation’s quality criteria, an additional $250,000 in start-up funding will be provided for each new school.

“Among the most successful and innovative schools in Indianapolis are those established by and affiliated with strong community-based organizations,” said Mayor Ballard. “By anchoring these new schools with community partners, CEOs for New Schools will advance the number of Indianapolis students who can access high-quality schools in our city.”

Applications and more information can be found at www.indy.gov/mayor/charter or by calling (317) 327-7458.

Through a competitive application process, the top five selected organizations will each receive an $11,500 development grant as well as assistance from the Mayor’s Office of Education Innovation to explore the type of school they want to create and/or recruit to Indianapolis. The applicant will then work with the Indiana Public Charter School Association and other support organizations on their leadership, organizational, financial, academic, and facility plans.

In most instances, charter schools thrive when they are closely affiliated with a locally based, community-oriented business or nonprofit with a strong record of contributing in a positive way to the city. The CEOs for New Schools competition builds upon this model of success. Founding roles vary but typically include leading the school planning and design process; participating in community coalitions that plan and/or launch the new school; managing and operating the academic and operational functions of the school; and providing various
forms of ongoing support. Examples of schools started by organizations include the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana), Hope Academy (Fairbanks), Andrew J. Brown Academy (Indiana Black Expo), and Herron High School (The Harrison Center for the Arts), among others.

The resources and institutional capacity these groups bring – such as an intimate knowledge of Indianapolis, access to capital, in-kind services, organizational leadership and capacity, leveraging relationships with other community leaders and constituents, an entrepreneurial skill set, and a track record of results-oriented success – are significant factors contributing to each school’s success.

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Charter schools are independent, tuition-free public schools that have control over their own curriculum, staffing, organization and budget. In exchange for this freedom, they must meet the highest academic and organizational standards. Eighteen Mayor-sponsored charter schools are currently in operation with five more scheduled to open this fall. For more information on Mayor-sponsored charter schools, visit www.indy.gov/mayor/charter.

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