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City Schools and Libraries Joining Forces To Maximize Services

(February 19, 2014) Hartford Public Schools and Hartford Public Library today launched a major partnership, under which the two institutions will be sharing resources to maximize access to their services by city students and their parents.

The agreement, developed by a team of administrators from the library and the district, calls for dividing the city into ten zones, each anchored by a library branch that will, in turn, collaborate with every school in its zone to create programs targeted to the families in each school.

Hartford Schools Superintendent Christina M. Kishimoto and Hartford Public Library Chief Executive Officer Matthew K. Poland kicked off the project today at the Goodwin Public Library Branch, 460 New Britain Avenue, where the plan will be piloted with the Breakthrough Magnet School, the Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary Hooker, the Expeditionary Learning at Moylan School, the Montessori Magnet at Moylan, Kennelly School and Batchelder Elementary School.

Among the features that the plan already anticipates are: a whole new range of after-school and summer enrichment programs that focus on love of reading and learning; tutoring services; the use of library facilities to display student art exhibits; and the development of a special website that grants students and teachers access to the library's vast storage of online books.

"This innovative partnership between the City's public education institutions will have tremendous collective impact on student success," said Mr. Poland. "Sharing collections, technology and staff expertise in both organizations will facilitate the development of literacy skills that are key to successful and productive careers"

Each school in the zone has been asked to designate a lead teacher or library media specialist to act as liaison between the school and the Goodwin branch manager. It is expected that the coordination of services between the Goodwin branch and the schools in its zone will serve as a template for the other nine zones. Plans call for all library branches to have working relationships with their zone schools within two years.

"I'm very excited about this partnership because it is focused on further improving student achievement," Superintendent Kishimoto said. "I expect that our collaboration with Hartford Public Library will have very positive implications for our efforts to have every child

reading at grade level by third grade and for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards.”

The district and the library will also be forming a citywide leadership team, consisting of a branch manager, a library media specialist and a technology expert to oversee and facilitate expansion of the plan.

ABOUT HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Hartford Public Library traces its roots to 1774. It operates 10 locations and a Library-on-Wheels in the City of Hartford. The Library receives more than 860,000 visits per year. Services include access to a large collection of materials for reading and research, as well as music and video. Programs provide education, information and enrichment to the people of Hartford in such areas as citizenship training, literacy, business skills and cultural awareness. The mission of Hartford Public Library is to provide free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. Visit hplct.org and the library’s new blog at blogs.hplct.org.

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