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News Release

Hartford's Student Attendance at Record Highs Despite Early Start of the School Year

Students, Parents, and Community Demonstrate Commitment to Education

(September 5, 2007) – One week after the start of the 2007-2008 school year, Hartford has a reason to celebrate. Attendance numbers on the first day of school were higher than in previous years, with preliminary totals reported of nearly 90% of students going to school on the first day.

“These numbers demonstrate that parents and students will rise to the goals we set for them when properly informed,” said Hartford Superintendent Dr. Steven J. Adamowski. “In fact, what we are seeing here is an example of our students exceeding the low expectations of the past, a trend we think we will see more of as we focus on raising student achievement.”

Hartford schools opened earlier this year than ever before in order to increase classroom time and instructional opportunities for students. Although some members of the public were critical of the plan to begin before Labor Day, the Board of Education agreed that starting the school year earlier was a desirable and achievable goal-- an assertion that was resoundingly supported by the number of students who came to school, ready to learn, on August 29th. Last year, only 80% of projected students were in attendance on the first day of school.

Hartford Mayor and Chairman of the Board of Education Eddie A. Perez said, "We're raising expectations and standards for our students and that includes improving attendance. I'm glad to see our youngsters are responding to that challenge and we're all going to expect even greater results next year. The first day of school is essential to setting the right tone for the rest of the school year. I want to congratulate Dr. Adamowski, and all the teachers and staff at Hartford Public Schools for empowering the students with the tools they need to achieve positive results. Being in class, on time, and in uniform will help them successfully focus on their education."

Superintendent Adamowski credited the high attendance numbers in large part to the outpouring of support from the community. In the weeks and months leading up to the new school year, parents and community leaders worked in partnership with the school system to spread the word-- distributing flyers, holding community events and forums, and reminding friends and neighbors to be ready to learn, in uniform, and in school on August 29th.

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