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NEWARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS ISSUES IMPLEMENTATION REPORT ON HISTORIC CONTRACT WITH TEACHERS UNION

Over \$50 Million in Additional Compensation Provided to Teachers Throughout the District in the Last Year

[Newark, New Jersey – December 12, 2013] One year after the Newark Public Schools (NPS) and the Newark Teachers Union (NTU) forged a historic agreement transforming accountability throughout the school district, NPS has released a report detailing activities and results over the last year to implement that agreement.

Today's announcement highlights One Newark - a community-wide agenda to ensure all students are in excellent schools and thriving communities and are on the path to excel in college and 21st century careers. Over the last few months, One Newark initiatives -- which includes bringing accountability into classrooms and investing in great teachers -- have brought together leaders, community advocates, educators, local clergy, and friends across public charter and district schools. Together, we've made a promise to Newark families: we must embrace a bold, unified, city-wide plan to build and support 100 excellent schools and ensure equitable access for all students.

"Over the last year, the District and the NTU have come together to create accountability in our classrooms and successfully implement real change," Newark Public Schools Superintendent Cami Anderson stated. "As the report details, in less than one year, Newark has basically reinvented the wheel. There is still work to be done, but we are demonstrating to our families and community that we are committed to implementing bold plans that keep kids at the forefront of our decisions. While we continue to have robust debate over the future of our city, I want to credit Joe Del Grosso for his vision and leadership on this issue. Contract or no contract, his help during the last year of implementation ensures a new system focused on putting great teachers in front of our children."

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Newark Public Schools

“What we accomplished in less than a year in terms of implementation is amazing,” stated Newark Public Schools Chief Talent Officer Vanessa Rodriguez. “For years, Newark did not have a consistent way of evaluating our teachers, so we created new systems and organized new trainings to support educators and fairly assess performance. Teachers are empowered to be a part of the actual review process and evaluations are communicated each semester. We have more work to do but we are off to a great start. This administration is fiercely committed to continuous improvement.”

Comprised of best practices from around the country tailored for the Newark community, the contract established groundbreaking reform within the City and unified NPS and the NTU around the core principles of accountability, innovation and results.

Most notably the contract, which was ratified by over 60 percent of Union members, was the first contract in the state of New Jersey to tie the pay of public school teachers with classroom performance. In short, the contract rewards good teaching.

The report details the major accomplishments of the contract over its first year of implementation, including:

- Newark replaced an antiquated teacher compensation system where salary increases were automatic, to one that actually rewards performance. All teacher salary amounts for 2013-14 were – for the first time ever – determined in part by their evaluation rating from 2012-13.
- \$1.3M was awarded in bonuses to highly effective teachers. 190 teachers received bonuses ranging from \$5,000 to \$12,500, with greater bonuses going to teachers in hard-to staff subjects and the lowest-performing (25%) of schools.
- NTU members received over \$50 million in additional compensation as a result of various stipends, one-time payments, and bonuses outlined in the contract.
- Newark’s new teacher evaluation system was developed with extensive input from teachers and created innovative approaches for empowering teachers such as peer validators, a Peer Oversight Committee, School Improvement Panels, and new staff roles such as Special Assistants of Teacher Quality.
- 18 schools took advantage of extended learning time. This provides students more productive learning time and teachers with a greater ability to work collaboratively.
- The district office built new data systems and streamlined processes to support 23,000 new transactions related to payment of stipends, salaries, and bonuses.

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While the district has been working to ensure all of these aspects of a new contract are well executed, true success comes down to support from teachers themselves. "The implementation of this new system means that those teachers who work diligently to ensure the highest level of student achievement will not go unnoticed," stated Madison Elementary teacher Tracey Roudez. "Additional incentives may serve as a catalyst to propel others to go beyond the 'call of duty' to ensure the success of our students."

"As someone who has transitioned from the board room to the classroom, I am not a newcomer to performance bonuses," stated Hawthorne English teacher Bruce Fryer. "Individual success in any position can be attained in a myriad of ways. But one thing that all highly effective employees have in common is that they produce the best numbers. I teach because I love to see my students excel. I teach in Newark because the district values my accomplishments and is willing to put their money where their mouth is. That makes for a great partnership."

"I know this is hard for many to understand, especially teachers who have been working in the district for a long time, but something had to be done," stated teacher of mathematics at Newark Early College High School Priyank Bhatt. "While I know it is hard—especially hard for those who did not get bonuses in this first year—the merit increase is substantial, it's a lot of money and it's a needed incentive."

For the full report, please visit <http://www.nps.k12.nj.us>.

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