



Bridgeport Public Schools

For Immediate Release

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**Superintendent to address school facility improvements under
“Partners in Progress Facilities Improvement Program”**

Press conference to be held on Tues., Feb 27 at 10:30am

Bridgeport, CT – Feb. 23, 2007 – Superintendent Dr. John J. Ramos will discuss Harding High School facility improvements that have occurred over winter break, as well as announce upcoming district-wide facility improvement plans at a press conference to be held on Tues., Feb. 27 at 10:30 am in the lobby of Harding High School.

The improvements are part of the three-pronged “Partners in Progress Facilities Improvement Program.” The three-pronged approach includes (1) immediate and continuous maintenance efforts, (2) long term district-wide facility improvements, some of which will be made possible through a \$25 million State Department of Education construction grant, and (3) implementation of the EPA’s Tools for Schools Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) program.

“The city does not want to provide ‘quick-fix’ solutions, rather we are making every effort to provide long-term, quality maintenance and repair solutions,” Ramos said. “We, as a community, need to be Partners in Progress. The immediate repairs, long-term facility improvements, and Tools for Schools program are vital to our school facilities as well as the well-being of our students.”

During winter break, Harding High School received numerous repairs, including various sink and toilet repairs in restrooms throughout the schools, as well as a fresh coat of paint in student bathrooms. Additionally, Harding High School received repairs to their heating system and lighting fixtures were renewed.

Repair and replacement efforts that will continue in force over the next two summers are funded by a \$25 million construction grant. Twenty-five schools will benefit from this funding, which has been provided through special legislation that enables Bridgeport to complete maintenance work which is otherwise not eligible for State funding. Summer maintenance work is being coordinated with summer school planning efforts to ensure that student academic needs are met as well. Repair and replacement projects include but are not limited to ceiling tile replacement, gym floor repairs and replacements, window replacements, restroom repairs, HVAC repairs, boiler replacement, electrical work and upgrades, and chimney work.

In addition to necessary repairs and upgrades, the Bridgeport Public School system will participate in the Tools for Schools program. Although program participation isn't mandatory until January 2008, Bridgeport Public Schools felt that immediately implementing this additional initiative to inspect and evaluate air quality in its school facilities would be beneficial to the students and staff. The EPA's Tools for Schools program is a low or no cost, proactive strategy to address IAQ problems in schools, by using collaborative efforts of school staff and parents. The building-based teams, which lead the Tools for Schools effort, consist of the principal of each participating school and one of each of the following: custodian, teacher, parent, and nurse. The teams will receive training by members of the EPA, the Connecticut Department of Health, and the American Lung Association.

The mission of the Bridgeport Public Schools and its surrounding community is to graduate all students college ready and prepared to succeed in life. For more information about Bridgeport Public Schools visit the website at www.bridgeportedu.com.