

## Press Releases

**\$51 MILLION GRANT FROM GATES FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT SMALL, DYNAMIC HIGH SCHOOLS TO BOOST STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

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**\$51 MILLION GRANT FROM GATES FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT SMALL, DYNAMIC HIGH SCHOOLS TO BOOST STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

*Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and NYC Department of Education Partner to Support 67 New Schools as Part of New York City's Overall Plan to Create 200 Effective and Rigorous Small High Schools*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today joined the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to announce a \$51.2 million effort that will support the creation of 67 new small, challenging high schools citywide. The creation of these schools will make it possible for more students to receive the high-quality education necessary for success in today's demanding economy. The Mayor was joined by Bill Gates, co-founder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein and Chief Executive of the Department of Education's Office of Strategic Partnerships Caroline Kennedy at a press conference at Morris High School Campus in the Bronx.

"Working with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to create more small, challenging high schools is another important step in our mission to reform education in New York City," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Starting this school year, we have implemented the most sweeping reforms in education the City has ever seen with one goal in mind - to put our children first. We have begun a new era in education, and it is through innovative public-private partnerships like this that we will be able to continue to improve our schools. I would like to thank Bill Gates for this generous contribution and for the Foundation's dedication to New York City's schoolchildren."

"For too long we have relied on an outdated model to educate our young people," said Bill Gates, co-founder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "New York City is demonstrating how we can bring our schools into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to make sure that all students, not just a select few, are prepared for college and the working world. Our country's civic, social and economic future depends on our ability to do this on a national scale."

In all, the foundation announced nationwide grants totaling \$66.5 million today as part of its ongoing effort to improve high school graduation rates, particularly among African-American and Hispanic students. To date, the foundation has invested \$590 million to support 1,600 schools nationwide, the majority of which are high schools.

Today's grants are part of New York City's widespread plan to boost

graduation and college-going rates by creating 200 effective and rigorous small high schools. The grants will support the creation of 67 of these new schools by replicating model high schools and replacing large, struggling high schools in high-need areas throughout the City. Nationally, studies show that nearly one of every three students who enter the ninth grade does not graduate, and a wide achievement gap persists between white and minority students.

Research on the benefits of smaller high schools has spurred more than half of the nation's largest urban school districts and their communities, including New York City, to transform many of their large high schools into smaller, more focused schools designed to prepare students for college-level work and rewarding careers.

"Creating small, rigorous high schools is a key part of our Children First initiative to raise student achievement and improve graduation rates," said Chancellor Joel I. Klein. "Thanks to the tremendous foresight and generosity of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, we will be able to support 67 new small high schools that will provide an innovative and effective option for students throughout the City."

New York City already has a network of high-performing small schools and alternative schools that serve more than 50,000 low-income and minority students. The Julia Richman Education Complex (JREC) in Manhattan, for example, is one of the most successful high school turnaround stories in the country. In 1992, JREC housed 3,000 students and only about one in three students graduated. JREC now houses four small high schools – each with graduation and college attendance rates of over 80 percent. With previous support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corp., and the Open Society Institute, many other schools, including the academies that now make up the Morris High School Campus, the site of today's announcement, are already showing great promise.

The new small high schools will focus on underserved communities, and offer rich and rigorous curricula, including college-readiness. Small schools foster close relationships between students and adults. A New York study found that students in smaller high schools had higher graduation rates, higher college-going rates and lower dropout rates than their peers in larger schools. A Chicago study found students in small schools had dropout rates one-third lower than those in big schools. Other studies have shown that small schools are safer than big ones and show great promise for raising achievement levels among disadvantaged students.

"For me, being at a small high school means that my teachers know me and I feel as if I matter," said Student A. "I wish more of my friends could go to a school like this. It really does make a difference."

Today's grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will go to seven non-profit organizations that work with the Department of Education, including a grant of \$29.2 million to New Visions for Public Schools. A nonprofit organization, New Visions has already helped create 40 new high schools in NYC through a \$31 million partnership between the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corp. and the Open Society Institute. Other intermediaries of today's grants include: Replications, Inc, Institute for Student Achievement, The College Board, Asia Society, Outward Bound, Inc., and the LaGuardia Education Fund, Inc. Five of the intermediaries are creating schools only in New York City. Asia Society and Outward Bound, Inc. are starting New York schools as part of larger national efforts.

The high schools will take different forms – including several that will be replications of existing schools such as Frederick Douglass Academy and International High School – but all will primarily serve mostly minority, low-income students, and focus on personalization, high performance and college-readiness.

**New Visions for Public Schools**, New York City, (receiving \$29.2 million) will sponsor and support 30 new schools.

**Replications, Inc.**, New York City, (receiving \$4.8 million) will create eight personalized and rigorous high schools.

**The Institute for Student Achievement (ISA)**, Lake Success, N.Y., (receiving \$6 million) will support the creation of 10 new, small, college-preparatory high schools.

**The College Board**, New York City, (receiving \$4.4 million) will create six new College Board Schools designed to prepare students to successfully complete multiple Advanced Placement (AP) classes before graduation.

**Asia Society**, New York City, (receiving \$1.6 million for New York City; \$7.5 million for larger national effort) will create a network of 10 internationally themed schools, three of which will be located in New York City.

**Outward Bound**, Garrison, N.Y., (receiving \$3.2 million for New York City; \$12.5 million for larger national effort) will open eight small Expeditionary Learning high schools in New York City.

**LaGuardia Education Fund**, New York City, (receiving \$2 million) will create two new international high schools serving recent immigrants who are English-language learners.

**The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** is building upon the unprecedented opportunities of the 21st century to improve equity in global health and learning. Founded by Bill Gates' father, William H. Gates Sr., and Patty Stonesifer, the Seattle-based foundation has an endowment of approximately \$24 billion. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, [www.gatesfoundation.org](http://www.gatesfoundation.org)

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