



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 30, 2012

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR EMANUEL AND WALGREEN CO. CEO GREG WASSON ANNOUNCE A PILOT INITIATIVE ENCOURAGING PARENTS TO GET INVOLVED WITH THEIR SCHOOLS

Walgreen Co. Will Provide "Balance Rewards" Cards Worth \$25 to Parents at 70 Schools

Across the City Who Participate in Report Card Pick-Up Day;

Pilot is Part of New Steps CPS Is Taking to Engage Parents Across the District

Mayor Emanuel and Walgreen Co. CEO Greg Wasson announced today a new public-private partnership that creates a pilot incentive program aimed at encouraging parents to become more involved in their schools and part of new efforts CPS is undertaking to better engage parents across the district. The pilot provides parents with a "Balance Rewards" card with 25,000 points, worth the equivalent of \$25 in Walgreens in-store purchases, when they pick up their students' report cards and participate in parent-teacher conferences during Report Card Pick-Up days. The pilot will begin this fall with 70 schools across the city that have historically struggled to engage parents.

"The success of a student is supported by three pillars: a principal who is held accountable for that success, a teacher who is committed to that success, and, most importantly, a parent who is involved at home," said Mayor Emanuel. "We are opening the doors so that our parents can get involved, as well as providing the information they need on how their schools measure up so they can stay involved. This partnership is a creative way to explore ways to achieve this goal."

During Report Card Pick-Up Day, parents not only receive their students' report cards; they tour their school, visit classrooms, and participate in parent-teacher conferences where they learn more about their children's performance in different subjects, if improvement is needed and what they as parents can do to help their children succeed academically.

“Principals and educators can set the environment for learning within a school. Beyond those boundaries, it is incredibly important for that environment to be reinforced for students by parents, guardians and family members,” said CPS CEO Byrd-Bennett. “We need to do more and we can do more to actively engage our parents within our schools, and we will continue to look for new and creative ways to do so.”

CPS has taken steps to provide parents with more information about their schools so that they can make the decisions that are best for their children, putting overall school report cards online for parents to browse as well as making them available on Report Card Pick-Up days. CPS also launched an interactive school locator that helps parents find their neighborhood school, identify other schools in their area, and compare their performance by easily linking to their overall school report cards. The map is located at www.cps.edu/map.

By the middle of November, revamped overall school report cards will be available online for parents with students in both Track E and Track R schools, as well as in-person on Report Card Pick-Up days. The revamped school report cards will be easier to understand, and will also provide details on how parents can access support and information for their families through district-provided services.

“Walgreen Co. is excited to work with Mayor Emanuel, the Chicago Public Schools and CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett, and others across the city to promote family involvement with their children’s education. We appreciate this opportunity to support and give back to our hometown community,” Walgreen Co. President and CEO Greg Wasson said. “Through our Balance Rewards program and leveraging our nearly 150 convenient locations in the city of Chicago, Walgreen Co. can play a helpful role in advancing family engagement in student achievement and success.”

The 70 schools in this pilot program were chosen based on their low record of successful parent engagement, measured in part by their “5 Essentials” rating, which is an evidence-based system that uses student and teachers surveys to assess level of parental involvement. Walgreen Co. has committed to providing support for this pilot throughout this school year and CPS will collect, track and analyze the data on parent participation through this pilot to determine the its effectiveness.

#