



Better Buildings: Better Schools Issue 30 (September 2005)

Monthly news on DC Public School facilities from the 21st Century School Fund (21CSF), a Washington DC based, nonprofit - **working to build the public will and capacity to improve urban public school facilities**. To subscribe/unsubscribe, please email: newsletter@21csf.org.

DCPS Master Education Plan

District of Columbia Public Schools is in the beginning phase of developing a master education plan and related educational facilities master plan, in addition to a capital improvement plan and budget. The administration is hoping to finish the master education plan by December 2005 and the educational facilities plan by March 2006. The capital improvement plan and budget for FY2007-2012 are expected to be prepared by this fall.

Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School – Renovation and Expansion Complete

Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School re-opened this fall in newly renovated and expanded space. The historic Birney School (formerly Nichols Avenue School) at Howard Road and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE is the new home of TMA. 21st Century School Fund assisted Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School as it planned and developed this state of the art facility. To view photos of this exciting project visit our website www.21csf.org.

DCPS Beautification Day – A Success!

Hundreds of citizens came out across the District on Saturday, August 27th to volunteer in the first annual “DC Ready Schools Beautification Day.” Organized by DCPS, parent and community groups, and various city agencies, the event was a neighborhood work bee to sweep, weed, paint, and generally clean up the grounds of the District’s traditional public schools right before students returned. Flowers were also planted and mulch put down at most of the schools. Many of the tools and supplies used that day were provided at a reduced price by Home Depot, and other corporations and private sector entities provided contributions. This year’s organizers will be meeting soon to discuss lessons learned from this inaugural event in order to plan an even better Beautification Day for the start of school next year. If you have comments or questions regarding a future “Beautification Day,” please email Nancy Huvendick (nhuvendick@21csf.org) or Jordan Spooner (jspooner@21csf.org).

Ready Schools Project

This fall DC VOICE and its many collaborators will again conduct the READY SCHOOLS PROJECT (RSP) – to make sure our schools are receiving the supports they need to provide high quality teaching and learning for all children. Information will be gathered from principals, parents and teachers in over 50 schools. Last year’s project report findings helped obtain an extra \$6 million from the city for summer facilities repair work, and also have helped spur earlier

DCPS teacher hiring. Here are several ways to participate in the Project and make it a success this year:

- Attend one of the volunteer trainings in early September
- Participate on a team that conducts the RSP checklist at a local school
- Help recruit other volunteers
- Identify parents and teachers to participate in focus groups

For more information, or to sign up to volunteer, please contact DC VOICE at 986-8534 or elandberg@dcvoice.org.

Look For New DCPS Facilities Opening This Year

DCPS plans to open three new or completely refurbished schools during the 2005-06 school year:

Bell-Lincoln will co-locate Bell Multicultural High School and Lincoln Middle School at a large new building at the corner of 16th and Irving Streets. in Columbia Heights near the Green Line Metro. January 2006.

Thomson Elementary School is being completely modernized, with underground parking and a rooftop play space. It is downtown at 12th and L Streets NW near the new Convention Center. January 2006.

Brightwood Elementary School, Phase I – a new section along 13th Street NW, opened for the start of school this year. It includes some new classrooms, a multipurpose room and new offices. Most of the classrooms are still in the old wing along Nickerson Street while the rear section is under construction. Staff members said, “It’s uplifting with lots of natural light and nice colors. There is a sense of well-being. It feels good to come to school!” Phase II and the final Phase III should be done by next fall.